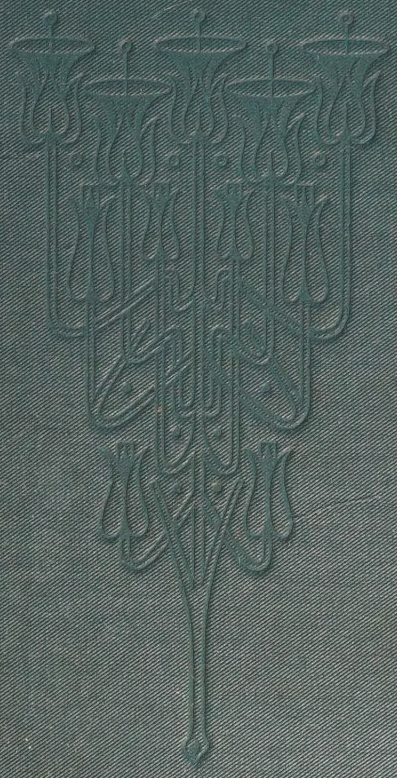
THE SECRET OF RIGHTEOUSNESS



W. WOODING

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THE SECRET
OF
RIGHTEOUSNESS

BY

WILLIAM WOODING, B.A.

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PREFACE

'For many years you have spoken on religious matters under the grave pressure of time and strenuous occupation. You are now free to think more deliberately. Will you not use your leisure to tell us what you deem to be most important of those things of which you have so often spoken?'

Such were the suggestions of my sons on my retirement from regular ministerial service. Every one can see that the conduct of men is no longer governed by religious institutions or their spokesmen. The grounds of action are becoming increasingly personal, whilst yet life seems no better equipped for self-guidance. Nothing can be of such supreme importance as living rightly, whatever be the fate of those authorities which have heretofore served to enforce it. If men are to be faced with the problem of life without the usual helps from religious association, it is all the more needful to examine the real grounds of conduct in the common affairs of social intercourse. I have therefore been led to search for the unalterable basis of righteousness, at the same time being careful to distinguish between what must and what only may be—wherein we are not morally free and wherein we are at liberty to live our own life.

If I have really touched what, with large presumption, I have ventured to call the 'Secret of Righteousness' I shall regard the request of my sons as proportionately fortunate. To them first, therefore, I commend this volume in the hope that it may be of service to them. But, if to them, it may be not without interest to others. In any case I should be glad to add one small stone to the upbuilding of God's kingdom which is righteousness, in a world where the chief hindrances have ever lain in the unruly wills of men.

W. W.

London, 4 *June*, 1913.

SYNOPSIS OF THE ARGUMENT

I RIGHTEOUSNESS . . . . . pp. 13–27

The question is first of all to determine what we mean by the terms right and wrong, and to find a solid basis of judgment as to why right is right and wrong is wrong. Righteousness cannot vary with time and circumstances, though we very properly allow for these in our estimation of conduct with regard to particular acts. But we have here no concern with Casuistry which cannot provide for all cases; we rather want to find the true grounds of any judgment at all.

It is assumed as an axiom that all questions of right and wrong have reference to some rule or law which expresses intention, as in mechanical constructions, games, or national law. Apart from such intention there can be no meaning in the terms right and wrong.

II DIVINE RIGHTEOUSNESS . . . . pp. 28–46

The existence and personality of God are assumed in all religions, and are therefore not argued here. In Hebraism, God and unrighteousness are incompatible ideas. Faith here is comparable with that of science in the perfect order of Nature. But, if purpose be the clue to the meaning of right and wrong, we must concede that human life does not appear to be the sole purpose of God. And as we cannot know the whole of that purpose we cannot claim to be competent judges of the divine activity. We are, however, growingly assured that the universe is an Order—a Cosmos—and therefore is the expression of purpose

within which human life lies only as a part. But God is related to the whole as well as to all its parts. In early religious life, when universal order was not known, God was regarded as an arbitrary monarch whose will could be deflected from his purpose, and prayer was regarded as a means of changing the divine will. But the righteousness of God must be his perfect consistency with his own order. Any departure from this would undermine faith in the established order of things; and if prayer have any object at all it ought only to be our personal effort to get into harmony with the divine purpose. The miraculous can no longer be part of our mental furniture, for all events must somehow lie within the order established of God. There can be no meaning in the phrase 'divine righteousness' except as referable to the order which may not be broken.

III HUMAN RIGHTEOUSNESS . . . . pp. 47–72

As the divine righteousness lies in God's perfect consistency with the whole order of the universe so the righteousness of man lies in the same consistency with that part of the order to which he belongs. But the whole order is the expression of the divine will; hence, religiously expressed, human righteousness is a voluntary conformity with the will of God. There is therefore but one righteousness which is the same for God and man with an obvious difference. This is not affected by any variety of human standards nor even by the personal authority of conscience.

We are chiefly concerned with morals which are entirely social. All nameable vices and virtues are social, so that the solitary stands outside the sphere of morality.

The social order lies in two distinct planes, of which—

(*a*) The first contains those unchangeable elements which are as inevitable in operation as the laws of Nature.

(*b*) The second is a large region in which society, though not always the individual, is free to adopt its own modes of life.

These differences may be illustrated by an examination of truth as a fundamental law, and polygamy as an accidental variety of social life.

IV THE CULTURE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. pp. 73–111

The summary of the argument so far.

For temporary convenience we distinguish two parts of the divine order, the natural and the moral. Yet remember both are natural and both are moral.

So far as concerns the natural order we are sufficiently eager both to learn and obey. In pure science, especially as applied to the arts and conveniences of life, our docility is perfect. We accept all risks and are willing to pay any price for our proficiency. We never question the severity and stability of Nature's order; we are glad of it even when we suffer.

Our only trouble arises in the sphere of morals, and here precisely because we are social beings. We are self-centred from childhood, and soon collide with others equally self-centred. It is difficult to be reconciled to our personal limitations. We are ignorant of fundamental social laws, nor are we trained in them as in the natural sphere. We distrust our teachers who are in like case of uncertainty with ourselves. We argue against solitary action and wait for common agreement. We perceive that moral issues are apparently deferred, and that after all care of self is the law of life. We distrust society's care of our personal interests, and eagerly use our accidental advantages—the more so as, even with force at its command, society seems to have no permanent ideal for itself. There is a social *vis inertiæ* against which individual effort seems powerless, whilst yet each person must act alone. Hence the need of early discipline.

Yet we are not quite alone; for every man who dares for right will find adherents, which is true not only in the case of notable men, but also in the ranks of humble life.

Here should be the place of religion which, but for

its institutional confusion and mistaken aims, might be most authoritative in morals.

There are two directions in which we very specially need discipline :—

(*a*) Godwards, because we reverence the Source of the inviolable order in which we live.

(*b*) Manwards, because we are essentially social, and no man can be a law to himself.

V SOCIAL SOLIDARITY . . . . . pp. 112–139

Elementary social laws are universal in character but as yet not universally applied. Yet solidarity was once more complete than it is now. We stand between two ideals, the local and the universal, of which the former is fast vanishing whilst the latter is only struggling to its birth. Between these lies the area of individualism.

We have vestiges of solidarity in the family, in patriotism, and in our graduated sympathy with the misfortunes of foreigners.

There are unreasoning forms of social ostracism, as in the case of a public executioner and his children, as also in cases of innocent connexion with criminals. In the case of the results of illicit sexual intercourse, unequal odium falls on the woman, and, contrary to all acknowledged equity, very heavily on illegitimate children.

The same principle holds in honourable directions. Compare the case of the soldier with that of the hangman. Great conquerors inflict the gravest evils on mankind, yet are much honoured. In aristocracies, dominant clerics, monkish orders, and craft guilds we have minor examples of the same order. Solidarity seems most attractive in clan life, of which Scott has given us vivid pictures.

Some remarkable examples appear in Bible story, as in the Fall of Adam, the rebellion of Dathan, and the sack of Jericho. Finally the Pauline scheme of redemption is drawn on the lines of social solidarity.

Human nature is therefore quite capable of the ideal and the universalism of Jesus is a call to a universal social morality and its one righteousness.

VI CASUISTRY . . . . . pp. 140–150

Ordinary persons have a fair perception of right and wrong in impersonal cases. The chief difficulty arises in the confusion of pressing interests. Hence casuistry is systematized for the uncertain. Yet it would be better if each could decide for himself; and it is comparatively easy when a man really desires the right.

After restating the essential social laws, cases are appended as situations in which the reader is asked to place himself and where he is invited to exercise his own personal judgment. A habit of reflection may thus be formed which shall stand in arrest of haste in momentary crises.

I

RIGHTEOUSNESS

IF one were asked what is absolutely the most important thing in organized human life, the answer might, with the utmost confidence, be given in the single word *righteousness*. Above all other quests this surely is of the first rank; and above all other boons that could be secured for man, that of having his life so adjusted as to inward feelings and outward relations that he could be truly and actually righteous amongst equally righteous fellows must be the highest and noblest of all conditions.

Yet I do not think the question is often resolutely faced as to what righteousness really is, what are the grounds and what the validity of our judgment in respect of those things which, with much intensity of personal conviction, we declare to be right or wrong. If there were any real agreement amongst men in respect of conduct or con-

ditions of life, such a question might never be seriously raised; but about almost any definite act very diverse judgments will be given. What is condemned to-day might have been applauded in other times, under other conditions, or by other people even at the present time. We may condemn the violent means by which certain persons seek to alter political conditions in Russia, India, Ireland, or elsewhere; but there must be a class of men and women who seriously approve of these deeds, otherwise they would not be of such frequent occurrence. Charlotte Corday is often held to have been right in assassinating Marat, Judith was regarded as a noble patriot in the murder of Holofernes, whilst Jael was blessed in national song for a deed that even then was a violation of one of the most sacred laws of social life.

These victims may well have deserved their fate, the perpetrators of these deeds may have been heroines of the highest esteem—animated by the most devoted love of their country; I neither defend the former nor condemn the latter; but the point is that there is no certain agreement about the one or the other. Whatever society at the time or history afterwards has felt or said, the

judgment of men remains divided : some have condemned, others have applauded ; whilst still others have appealed to the circumstances of time, place, and national stress as reasons for modifying harsh judgment. But when we have to make allowances it is clear that we have not yet reached any sure means of determining right and wrong. And if we are not agreed in respect of such acts as these, still less are we so in matters of more daily and common occurrence. When lying, cheating, fraud with attendant callous cruelty are condoned under the epithet *smart*, it is clear that under changed names very disreputable things are allowed to pass muster, not only without condemnation but with a questionable sort of praise.

Now questions of right and wrong can hardly depend on the calendar, nor on the accidental conditions of those who are called on to act in given crises of personal experience. If a thing be really right or wrong it must always and everywhere have those qualities by which we are impelled to make our judgment ; and if questions of relativity arise they must refer to something more stable and permanent than the changeful forms of human selfishness. Of course a

person of limited intelligence may not know, in a given case, what the right is : the crisis may be so surprising that he may be thrown off his balance and almost cease to be responsible for his actions ; but then it would seem better to detach these considerations from the question of the right or the wrong, and refer them to the adequacy or inadequacy of the man to the crisis that comes upon him.

This is sometimes done in law ; and there are cases where such imperfect means of judgment is acknowledged and provided for. The right and wrong of certain definite acts done or even contemplated is reduced to a scheme of casuistry for the guidance of the busy and the ignorant. In this case all responsibility of judgment is taken from men and women. Actions are appraised according to a scale of merit or demerit so that by consulting an expert priest, or by reading a duly prepared schedule judgment may be automatically obtained. A certain amount of discredit has deservedly attached to this system both from the proved immorality of its issues, and from the felt inadequacy of any person or group of persons to forecast all the cases that may arise or the vast variety of conditions under which they may happen.

At present, however, our question is not the fitness or unfitness of any man, in any given case, to form a judgment as to the rightness or otherwise of his own or anyone else's action, but to find the ground of any judgment at all; in short, to find out why any thing or act is right or wrong—what is it that makes it so? A child is told to do or refrain from doing a certain thing. He asks why. Because you wish it—but why? It is usual, and other people expect it—but why? Oh, but you must—why? Because you ought—why? And so on. The child is but asking the question that his elders have often asked before without finding an answer.

In academic discussions it has often been asked whether right be founded in the nature of things in such wise that it remains for ever unalterable, or whether it depend on some arbitrary will that may change. We are familiar with the idea of a human Autocrat whose decrees may so vary that his subjects may find it difficult to adjust their behaviour to his changeful moods. Under which of these conditions do we stand? What makes a thing right or wrong?

It may be taken as an axiom that all

questions of right and wrong have reference to some rule or general law which creates a standard; and such questions are determined by the purpose or intention that lies behind the standard rule or law. A mechanician is required to construct a machine for doing a certain kind of work. In such case the purpose of the machine dominates everything in its construction. Whatever will most simply and effectively carry out this purpose is right; whilst all else will be less right or wrong according to the degree of its failure or the amount of its inconsistency with the intention of the machine. The kind, quality, and adjustment of the materials used in construction, all involve the possibility of error, so that the question of right and wrong may at any time arise. That is right which properly subserves the purpose of the mechanician, and that is wrong which fails.

It is conceivable that the several parts of such a machine might be made to serve in other machines; but even so, it must do the work for which it is designed or be a mere makeshift for something else. In any case purpose, whether new or old, will determine its rightness or wrongness. A wheel, band,

or lever may be quite in place in one machine and quite out of place in another without the least change in its own essential qualities; its being in its place in the one case determines its rightness because it answers the proper purpose, and its being out of place in the second case only means that it hinders or does not contribute to that purpose; and it is therefore, and only therefore, said to be wrong.

Clearly we have nothing to do with the morality of the purpose involved in the machine. That may be right or wrong in itself, but its wrongness or its rightness is affected by quite other considerations than those here dealt with.

Suppose now we are building a house. The first question is, what is the house for? Is it to be the dwelling place of a family of persons of a definite number and of a certain social grade? We have now nothing to do with the suggestion that perhaps there ought to be no distinction of social grades: the house is to answer the above conditions, and the architect and builder must plan and work accordingly. Then the question of situation, of materials, of workmanship, the number and arrangement of rooms are all concerned

in the purpose for which the house is to be built. Right and wrong, adequacy or otherwise, appear in the fulfilment of that purpose or in failing to do so. But suppose it be God's house or a church that is to be built; then, the purpose being changed, though the same materials might be used, the incidence of right and wrong will change. You may, and some do, worship God in the home; for all that, when a house has the one object and purpose of worship, and especially of public worship, it will be felt that what is fit and appropriate for the one is not so for the other. A pulpit in a bedroom would be as much out of place as a bed in a church. With the change of purpose there is a corresponding change in the expression of right and wrong—except that in both cases purpose gives the clue.

A hospital is another kind of house the materials of which may be the same as before, but the difference of its governing intention necessitates differences in its order and arrangements, so that the standard of right and wrong is other than that in the preceding cases, except that generally purpose determines the whole matter.

Each of these three structures might serve

the purpose of either or both of the others; but in that case there would inevitably be some changes of arrangement to serve the altered purpose which manifestly determines the whole matter. Of all the separate kinds of houses that can be named, be it storehouse, club-house, outhouse, greenhouse, poorhouse, or parliament house, each has its special intention; and the right or wrong of their construction and arrangements is determined by that purpose alone, each separately and for itself.

Perhaps no simpler example could be given than the common games with which we amuse ourselves in idle hours. Two persons or parties stand in opposition contending for mastery according to rules that are strictly laid down beforehand. From beginning to end of the game there is not a single movement that taken by itself has significance or importance; yet, as each one must be strictly conformable to rule, every such movement takes on the quality of rightness or wrongness. But beyond the fact that each may be lawful, i.e., consistent with rule, the further consideration arises as to whether any particular lawful act will serve the purpose of the game, and the rightness or wrong-

ness of the act is determined solely by that purpose. The player may perhaps violate the elementary rules, in which case, whether by design or not, he plays wrongly ; or keeping within rule he may play unskilfully, and again he plays wrongly. The rules and purpose of the game alone confer upon the varied moves the quality of rightness or wrongness.

Consider for a moment the laws of a nation. They are clearly an attempt to define and regulate the mutual relations of the many individuals that compose that nation. There may be also long standing customs that are prior to any statute, which yet have all the sanctity and force of law. It is by no means suggested that these social arrangements are perfect even of their own kind. In their actual application to life under its changeful conditions, defects may appear and call for remedy. But in any case there was some less or more clear social intention behind the growth of custom or the enactment of statute ; and this intention may be assumed to be directed to public benefit. Now the conduct of the individual citizen will be judged by its conformity or inconsistency with that purpose or intention which gave rise to the law. Generally, of course, the law will be taken

as the expression of that intention, and so legality will at times override the wish of the individual to define that intention for himself. He may be condemned for conduct that is actually beneficial to the public, or be allowed to make personal gain to the manifest harm of the commonweal.

But in civilized States there is usually a provision in the law itself for revision and necessary alteration; and it is not allowed to the private citizen to make his own law or, in his private capacity, to change the conditions under which he and his fellows have agreed to live. If he break the law even by harmless or beneficial deeds he is wrong in the sight of that law; and even harmful acts that may be the objects of moral reprobation, yet, if they conform to the expressed law of the nation, are not by the law condemned. The reason of this is clear. Right and wrong are here legal; and, whilst laws are supposed to be made for the common benefit, it is not for the private citizen to ignore them even with the public advantage in view. They are the measure and interpretation of the law-maker's intention, and by them the citizen is justified or condemned.

Sometimes, indeed, cases arise where an

appeal is made to equity as against law, wherein it might seem that right and wrong are not always referable to a given rule or standard. It may happen that, contrary to its intention, the law may itself become an instrument of wrong. But then in civilized communities there is reserved to the king or chief executive a power of prerogative which may be called a prehistoric remainder outside the operation of statute law; just as the forest was the king's domain not yet brought under the legal jurisdiction of manor or chartered borough. It is not, as was claimed by our James II, a power to suspend the operation of statutes or of exempting particular persons from their incidence. It is the legal recognition of the imperfection of law, as an expression of the good intention of the law-maker, to serve the public good with absolute completeness. In drafting a statute, no man can possibly foresee all the cases to which it may be made to apply. It will include some that ought to be omitted, and omit others that ought to be included. Hence, whilst the law is good and expressive of good intention, its definitions may be defective for its purpose. So that this reserve of power must itself be conceived as

lying within the original good intention, and right and wrong are still referable to that intention. Revision and additional legislation will attempt to cope with the increasing complexities of life so that less and less demands will be made upon this reserved prerogative, but it will always exist as a benevolent resource, and often beneficent in action.

Again, in these same complex conditions of life cases arise where it is extremely difficult to distinguish right and wrong or find out precisely where they lie. Large social acts or processes are subdivided to such an extent and in such a manner that, though anyone may know that wrong is being done, it is impossible to locate or define it. The part taken by each participator may be so minute that its issues do not appear. The separate acts may seem perfectly harmless yet the sum total is clearly wrong, but only seen to be so after the event. In reality, however, such cases are difficult only because it is not easy to analyse them completely.

Let us then suppose a man has a piece of work to do which requires the co-operation of others. He has, it may be, to build a ship of war. Clearly there are here all the pre-

vious questions of wrong involved in its construction as in the case of the machine or house. But over and above these are others which the relations of co-operation involve. We need not discuss the rightness or wrongness of building the ship at all, we are speaking only of adaptation to purpose. The ship has to be built; and this can only be done by the co-operation of many persons amongst whom there must be a preliminary agreement under one master director. On the one side are questions arising out of wages offered and the general conditions under which the work has to be done. On the other are the quantity and quality of the work to be done during the appointed hours of labour. Where then is the purpose behind all these conditions in virtue of which we have the means of determining right and wrong? It may not be easy to give a precise and detailed answer; but in general we shall find it in one or other of a cluster of purposes and reciprocal social expectations involved in so complex a piece of work. The many subordinate agreements will dominate the various situations and determine in detail the right or the wrong.

We need not prolong this discussion, for

the point to be sure about is that, even in the most complex cases, whensoever we make a judgment of any thing or act we must have in our mind some rule or standard by which alone we are able to make a judgment at all. The terms implying rightness or wrongness have absolutely no meaning apart from some ideal with which such things are compared. And except for its further importance there is surely no need of strenuous insistence on so obvious a matter.

II

DIVINE RIGHTEOUSNESS

IF then the words right and wrong always have regard to some law, purpose, or standard, we must now ask what they mean in the phrase 'The *righteousness* of God.'

Let it be observed that we are not here concerned with the question of the existence of God. In one form or another this is the incontrovertible axiom of all religions of every grade of culture, and like other axioms is capable of neither proof nor disproof. It may be stated in different terms, but no religion is possible without this necessary presumption. Nor again are we concerned with his personality. We may agree that the term is a metaphor derived from the conditions of human consciousness, though what we mean when we try to define our personality is by no means clear. In applying this or any other term to the Deity we are, as some one has said, 'throwing words

at the infinite.' In general we must interpret the universe in human terms; and as we mean something by personality in speaking of ourselves we must mean that or some equivalent for it in speaking of God.

Moreover, all devout persons assume his righteousness. There are those, of course, who question the righteousness as they do the personality or even the existence of God. But religious literature is full of apologies for him who except in the regular course of his providence never justifies himself. From remote times, and especially by those men from whom we have derived our religious ideas, it was held to be impossible that the Eternal could be other than righteous. They were content to interpret all human vicissitudes in terms of his ineffable truth and goodness. If the nation suffered at the hand of its enemies, if drought or locust destroyed the hopes of harvest, if famine or pestilence wasted their strength, even if they saw 'the wicked flourish like a green bay tree,' or weak and innocent persons become the prey of the strong and evil disposed, none of these things seemed to shake their confidence. We may easily smile at the crude simplicity of their endeavours to find out the wrong

in themselves; but they never doubted God was righteous. The Hebrew poet looked northwards to the mountains that guarded his frontier: storm clouds or sea mists might shut out the familiar forms, but the obscurity soon passed by, revealing the serene and snowy Hermon which the poet took as the beautiful and appropriate symbol of the divine righteousness. To him God and unrighteousness were simply incompatible ideas. Even piety may have its times of depression; but behind all sense of mystery there was a full-orbed certainty which even at this lapse of time has still the power to sustain the faith of lesser men.

Now a certainty of this kind is a great gain, even though it rest alone on faith with no array of inductive arguments in its support. It is to religion like those primary and elementary convictions which gave birth to experimental philosophy. Apart from the inner certainty of the unity of nature modern science could not have been created. It was a great act of faith that determined the lines of investigation; and all subsequent discoveries have confirmed that preliminary hypothesis which at first was but the dream or intuition of a genius. If then this ancient

Hebrew faith be a true intuition in respect of the righteousness of God, it ought to be capable of some kind of verification in the growing experience of man ; though it must be confessed that the many apologies for God have not proved altogether satisfactory to those to whom they have been addressed.

In asserting that the notions of right and wrong have a necessary reference to some law or purpose, and that this is equally true when righteousness is predicated of Deity, there is one consideration which must be kept in mind. We human beings do not appear to be the sole end or purpose of divine providence. It is the failure to perceive this that has led to great difficulties in religious thought. To many persons, faith in the divine righteousness has seemed somehow at variance with the facts and conditions of life. Nothing has seemed so hard to bear as the broad fact that wicked men do prosper in the world, and that alongside of these, and even by their means, good and simple folk do come to grief. Common misfortune by what, in legal phrase, is called an 'Act of God' is fairly easy to be borne ; but that it should seem to lie in the very constitution of things that certain forms of evil should exist at all is supposed

to constitute a fair ground of charge against the power that ordained or permitted them. As an act of faith we may assert the righteousness of God ; but there is evidently a mystery here which we are not able to follow, more especially if we ourselves be in the throes of personal suffering. A large part of the pain of these things arises from a lack of perception of what is evidently the case that we human beings are only part and not the only end of whatever scheme or purpose underlies the universe. We may never find our true place in the mind that animates and directs the whole, but it certainly is not that of being the sole end of it all.

It is manifest that there are many things that seem to have no relation to us at all. Not for us alone has the earth passed through its various phases of becoming ; and so long as we remain under the delusion that for us alone the earth has been clothed with verdure, the sea and the air peopled with their myriad forms of life, and that all things have their *raison d'être* in man, we shall never be able to conceive of an absolutely righteous God. Earthquakes and other convulsions of nature, the many forms of predatory life, and the forces that are apparently hostile to human

good, do not fit in with any conceivable scheme that has humanity as its sole end. The beauty and grandeur of nature may give us intense delight, we being here with capacities to enjoy them ; but flowers have bloomed for vast æons of time before man could enter on their possession, and do even yet bloom where no known human purpose can be served by their beauty and fragrance. So that, however dominant we may now be in a world which we claim as our own, it is clear that the cosmos includes other purposes than those that serve the known interests of man.

Now let us assume that the universe is an ordered thing—a Cosmos. We need not raise the question as to how this order has been attained, nor how God stands related to it. He may be an artificer like Paley's watchmaker, or he may be the soul of it all as was supposed in the Alexandrine Cult of Serapis : the Cosmos is order : God has ordained it as if by an outer will ; or God himself is in that order as its energizing force. Let the relations be those of Creator and creature, lawgiver and subject, mind working upon and giving form to matter, or soul of which the universe is its vesture :—any of these modes of conceiving the matter will

serve. If any meaning can be attached to the phrase 'righteousness of God,' it must have reference to this order which springs from him as the expression of his will, or which is to be identified with him as its very life and being.

Let us moreover remember that, whilst human life cannot be the whole concern of this order, it is, with all that is involved therein, as much a part of this cosmos as anything else that exists. Whatever purpose there be, we are within it and it is within us, not excepting the human will, or where that prevails which seems to us disorder. And if the phrase is to have any meaning, the righteousness of God must be his faithful and absolute consistency with the order he has ordained. If we were to suppose that order changed for some purpose other than the present, then we must suppose the change would affect the whole cosmos: the right of the present would become wrong in the new order for the simple and all-sufficient reason that the measure of any possible appraisement or adjustment must also have changed. The question, therefore, of any alteration of the essence of right and wrong contains its own answer. The right-

eousness of God cannot be concerned in any conceivable change in the cosmos itself, any more than that of a mechanician if some other purpose had to be served by some very different machine. It can only be concerned with his consistent maintenance of the order which he has himself ordained.

Now the righteous God must be conceived as having relations with the *whole* and not merely with a *part* of the scheme of things, nor can he be judged by any meaner standard than that which concerns the whole. It follows, therefore, that the divine action or providence can be only very partially understood by us. There must be large regions into which we simply cannot follow him; nor can we be competent judges of his rectitude. By what means can we in any sense become capable of forming a judgment? To whom can he become responsible? or to what tribunal can appeal be made? With all reverence be such questions raised; but the only answer possible is 'God is his own interpreter.' Of necessity we must place ourselves in a quite subordinate position and refrain from judgment when we fail to understand. We are, however, beginning to feel a large measure of confidence that if we

could place ourselves at the very heart of things, we should, from that point of view, find that an order prevails from which absolutely nothing escapes, not even the contingency of the human will. It is this conceived perfect order that forms for us the only ground of our thoughts in respect to the righteousness of God.

Let us look at the matter in this way. Until comparatively very recent times there were no settled and well-grounded notions of general law. Perhaps we were not much disturbed to learn of its prevalence in the movements of the starry heavens. It took longer to accept with equanimity its universal presence and rule upon the earth. It certainly proved a very serious moral and religious disturbance when it was suggested that the affairs of men do not escape the control of law, which finds its illustration alike in our obedience and disobedience.

In the earlier conditions of religious life, our notions of the divine action were comparable with those inherent in an absolute as distinct from a constitutional monarchy. And no inconsiderable part of religious expression lay in an appeal to a being whose course of action was supposed to be determined

neither by the merit, demerit, nor the need of the suppliant, but by arbitrary favour. Of two contending nations, each might appeal to the same dread Lord for victory over the other party. It is not to be supposed that either or both meant to pray for a righteous issue to their quarrel. Nor was prayer a mere confession of ignorance of the right, or that resort to war was the only way of placing the matter in dispute before the tribunal of a righteous God with whose decision each would be content. Each desired victory and meant to obtain it by one means or another. Prayer was thought to be a means to that end, and perhaps as some sort of sanctification of the measures adopted to secure it. Either victor would be content to give God the glory, and consider a *Te Deum* well deserved. In short, each side desired to make God a party to its cause, as if he were a mere tribal deity upon whom each combatant had the sole right to make exclusive claims to favour. These combatants may have believed in the righteousness of their cause; but the appeal was for victory irrespective of right.

The same has no doubt often been true in respect of the doubtful issues of human

conduct on a lower scale. In the ordinary course of things no special prayers would be offered inasmuch as no acuteness of desire is felt ; and perhaps no particular care would be taken to see that no evil lurked behind the ordinary processes of business ; but in the surprising stress of a great personal crisis, with fortune or reputation trembling in the balance, the cry has been for success, if only for this time—and this sometimes with a consciousness of wrong torturing the mind.

Such things were and are possible only on the supposition of a God whose action was entirely arbitrary, and whose will could be deflected here and there by some favourable consideration for the trouble of a deeply agitated suppliant.

Religious life has been full of this kind of thing ; nor have the issues of such agonizing crises always been such as to disabuse the mind of so perilous a belief. The wrongful purpose has often been successfully accomplished, and injured innocence has not always found his trust in a righteous God justified by the event. Whether, in the long run, the divine righteousness has not sometimes been made clear, and the patient sufferer satisfied with deferred issues, is not now the point. In

the agony of the moment, the appeal has not been made to an absolutely righteous God at all, but to one who should make common cause with the suppliant whether he himself were conscious of right in his own cause or not. A claim has been made from opposite sides, in a national or personal crisis, for a special and arbitrary interference of divine power which should override general law for the production of a particular end rather than a strictly righteous issue.

Of course, we are not now discussing the general question of prayer. But one may suggest that, for the truly godly man, it is best explained as the earnest endeavour so to get into touch with God as to be able loyally to take sides with him. Knowing that a man cannot altogether order his own unruly will, nor always be in the position to see and do the right, his piety may express itself in prayer, formulating the wish in words, audibly or otherwise, that he may be brought into and kept in harmony with the divine will even in a pressing crisis of his affairs. He knows that God is righteous, whilst he himself is blinded by self-interest, or is otherwise greatly disturbed in judgment; yet his wish is that right should be done.

And perhaps one may suspect that the growing disinclination to the use of special prayer for particularly specified ends is the measure of a new appreciation that we have to do with a really righteous and universal God, rather than with one of no fixed rule of action other than an externally influenced, and therefore a corruptibly changeful will.

To put the case in familiar terms, it resolves itself into the question as to whether we live under an absolutely arbitrary rule, or within the limits of a constitution which by God will not, and by man cannot be overborne. Such ideas are intelligible enough in the realm of human government and personal relations. The edicts of an absolute ruler may so vary from time to time as to be inconsistent with or contradictory of one another; and in relation to them the subjects may not really know how they stand. This monarch is usually surrounded by courtiers who may be able to discover means of influencing his will, and so try to serve their own or the interests of their friends. In personal friendships many things are done that would not be done but for this form of intimacy. But in a constitutional government law holds its course apart from the fluctuation of feelings in the

monarch. At least so far as the constitution reaches, he is as much bound by its conditions as are his subjects. Neither the flattery of courtiers nor the appeal of personal distress may affect him or cause uncertainty in the law. He may have his prerogative to carry government over its dead points, or sometimes to bring law and equity into more perfect accord; but generally speaking there is no appeal to him for special favour: nothing but confusion and anarchy could arise from his intrusion as monarch within the limits prescribed by law.

Allow this parallel to hold in the case under consideration and it is easy to see our way at least through some of the conditions of human desire. Some persons would have rain at the same time and in the same neighbourhood, whereas others desire fine weather; each party to a lawsuit desires a favourable verdict—does not even incline to a compromise; health is desired quite apart from its lawful conditions; and pleasurable things are desired even though their possession entails inconvenience or pain on others. Such conflicting interests cannot be reconciled, and any appeal to the supreme Monarch is necessarily refused: the cases

are provided for in the constitution, and the law must prevail; for it is an orderly cosmos, and the righteousness of God is involved in its perfectly impartial maintenance.

Here then we find the rule or standard which we seek. The phrase 'The righteousness of God' is his perfect consistency with the constitution which he has ordained, nor can we imagine it to have any other meaning. The laws that lie at the base of all things in heaven and on earth are this constitution which, within its limits, expresses his will; and perfectly constitutional conduct is his righteousness.

That there is an order in the universe is clear to most men of rational capacity, and we can neither claim to be its sole end nor suppose that our convenience or desires entitle us to judge the Eternal. We stand within, and are therefore but a subordinate part of the order; so that we are properly concerned with only part of whatever purpose lies behind. Its fulness we can never know; but we see so much, that we are irresistibly impelled to believe that the purpose behind the order pervades the sum total of all dependent existence. Every new

and sure step in human knowledge enlarges the ground of this belief as the necessary basis of our intellectual activity.

Until the whole cycle of knowledge shall be completed, and nothing remains to be learned, the full and final meaning of that order can never be known; but we are increasingly able to sweep the ages ahead of us as well as those that lie behind. By the more inflexible application of the rational and logical faculties, the riddles of the past and future are being solved. Mysterious events and conditions begin to lose their appearance of detachment from the common order, whilst problems are brought into view whose existence was not so much as dreamed of or suspected. The once wide and spacious realms covered by miraculous darkness are being enlightened, explored, and mapped out so that the very term 'miracle' is ceasing to have any particular meaning. Its long standing and intrusive perplexity is felt to be groundless. Any alleged instance of the suspension or violation of the natural order of things, any alien interpolation of inconsistent purpose, is simply considered as a case of the as yet unexplained and unknown, in presence of which our judgment is sus-

pended for further investigation; but we have no doubt that the strange event, when fully known, will find its place in an inviolable order. That is to say, the miraculous is no longer a part of our mental furniture. No ring-fence may now shut off any single event or group of events from the operation of the general laws of the world.

It is, of course, conceivable that some unexplained phenomena may hint at conditions beyond our known order; but the presumption and expectation remain that some explanation will be forthcoming, which simply means that the phenomena will escape their present mystery and become part of the common stock of knowledge: they will be seen as part of the great order. As for instance, certain cases of faith healing have been brought into line; and, except as they are somehow connected with the deeper mystery of personality and personal relations, they have ceased to perplex us. In like manner the claims of telepathy may have some foundation; and, but for the charlatanism associated with it, spiritualism might have become a more serious inquiry. Everywhere the common presumption is that sooner or later all phenomena, being traced

to their origin, will find their place in the universal order. No advance of knowledge can be based on any kind of freak in nature. Even the freaks themselves are being examined with a view to explanation, but only on the assumption that all things, past and present, great and small, and however apparently diverse, are gathered up into an order that admits of no exception.

Here then is our conclusion. There is no meaning in the notions of right and wrong except as referable to order. Only so can the expression ' Divine righteousness ' become at all intelligible. For this latter, a universal order as expressed in what is called natural law or laws of nature, affords the only basis of judgment. Therefore it is that a miracle, in the usual acceptation of that term, becomes unthinkable. It would even be immoral in the sense that it would invalidate the order on which the universe moves in security. It would constitute a disorder such as in the case of an arbitrary monarch would undermine all trust in the stability of things.

We believe therefore that God will and must sustain intact the whole order that he has ordained. No present or particular interest of any kind may induce him to change

or set aside the laws that are the foundation of his rule. Into this order we are born, and we are conditioned by it; nor is it conceivable that its suspension, violation, or uncertainty could be other than a universal calamity. As yet there are vast regions of mystery in respect of which our ignorance may well make us feel our helplessness; but the pain and confusion in which we are sometimes involved must surely be very small in comparison with what would inevitably arise from the idea of an arbitrary God whose will from event to event could never be known or trusted.

III

HUMAN RIGHTEOUSNESS

WHEN Matthew Arnold defined God as 'that Power not ourselves which makes for righteousness,' he necessarily thought of the Deity as being himself righteous, and seeking to establish righteousness everywhere. He probably had in view more specially human righteousness which was being furthered by the whole course of divine providence. That end is not yet attained, but there is an urgency towards it which is of God. What then is human righteousness? By what standard shall it be determined? That is the question now before us.

It may be premised that we are not now dealing with any kind of religious system, or any scheme by which man may become or be considered righteous; but what do we mean by his righteousness when we talk about it and desire it for ourselves or others?

We have come to the conclusion that the divine righteousness is God's own self-consistency with the law and order which he has appointed and ordained for the universe ; what then is that of man ? We will give our answer at once. It is nothing other than man's voluntary consistency with that same order and law. That is to say, there is but one right for God and man alike ; nor is there any other difference than this :—God conforms to his own order, and therein is righteous ; man's righteousness lies in the same consistency with that same order, with the establishment of which he has nothing, and can have nothing to do. Since then the law and order of the world are the expression of God's will and purpose, we become righteous by obedience to his will and by entering into his purpose.

In the consciousness of our manifold failures in this respect, we are sometimes not indisposed to find excuse in the discovery that standards of right and wrong have much varied and do still vary as measures and guides of human conduct. Since they have manifestly changed in successive stages of historic development, and since diverse varieties contemporaneously exist amongst near

neighbours of the same general condition of culture, it is inferred that righteousness varies: what is right now was not formerly and may not hereafter be considered so. There is therefore no real righteousness to be looked for.

Now it is true that standards of right have varied from age to age, and will continue to do so; but that only means that they have been formulated to meet the condition of men in their successive grades of culture. They also represent the moral feelings of the several ages in which they prevail, whether we regard them as set up by some outer authority or as the spontaneous growth of popular life. One need not dispute the enormous service of these various standards in stimulating the upward progress of the less advanced; yet it is equally true that they may be a hindrance to persons of greater moral and spiritual sensitiveness. Their tendency is ever towards a sort of general average of conduct from which the lower may not, and the higher are not willing, to diverge. But neither their succession nor their contemporaneity in any way affects the question before us. What do we mean by comparing them either with the present

or an imagined future? We surely imply a standard other and higher than them all; and the only proper inference from such variability of standards is not that a true and unchangeable righteousness does not exist in idea, but that we have not found it, the reason being that we are looking for it in wrong directions or are not in any serious way engaged in the quest.

Similar considerations apply to the suggestion of the authority of conscience as an arbiter of right. It is often thought to be an end of all controversy when a man is adjudged to be true to that inner urgency for which the name 'conscience' stands. Of course every good man must follow this inner direction: he can do no other when he is thus urged towards or in restraint from some special act or course of life: for him it must be his present authority. But this can hardly be the end of the matter from the point of view of our quest. We qualify our judgment by saying 'He is acting according to his light,' which of course suggests that the appeal to personal conscience is not conclusive. Something more and other is felt to be required when we fail in respect of some natural and necessary social expectancy.

With regard to many honest and innocent divergencies of conduct the authority of conscience may be conceded; but if the lawful interests of others be thereby affected the appeal will be disallowed. Within certain limits the vagaries of conscience may be allowed, but we do not permit the practice of Suttee immolation in India, nor the neglect of sick persons by Christian Scientists in England. Conscience is but the measure of our knowledge and our sensitiveness in somewhat narrow and particular directions, and therefore has but little bearing on the question at issue.

Human righteousness is not to be measured by changing standards or the vagaries of the personal conscience. Whatever concessions may be made to the honesty of a man, we hold him responsible for his utmost endeavour to know all that should be known for the matter in hand, and for his prompt obedience to the instinct of appropriate action. We blame a man for thoughtlessness, we pity his ignorance, we may even exonerate him in certain cases; but we restrain him when the interests of others are involved, whilst yet we may allow that for himself his conscience must be the final court of appeal.

So far, however, from arguing from the multiplicity of standards and the inconclusiveness of conscience that no determinate human righteousness is to be found, we believe in one absolutely invariable basis for the whole order to which we belong. It is the same for God and man, with, of course, this very important difference that whereas the righteousness of God lies in his perfect consistency with the order that emanates from himself, that of man must consist in his proper adjustment to that same order, in the foundation and maintenance of which he can have had no part.

This is a matter which we can in no sense be fitted to criticize either by way of approval or disapproval, for we are within the order as part of its ordinance, and may not consider ourselves as its sole aim and intent. Our standards, therefore, temporary or otherwise, our conscience, enlightened, clouded, or darkened, can have nothing to do with essential righteousness except so far as, and as soon as possible, to be adjusted to that order which may not be changed for our convenience, or our presently apparent good. We may put our time-pieces backwards or forwards for any temporary purpose, they

may show varied degrees of excellence in their mechanical movements, but after all the sun determines the time : by this alone is the value of any of our time measures determined. In like manner the righteousness of man lies in his adjustment to the will of God as expressed in the universal order to which he himself conforms. 'Be ye holy, for I am holy,' and 'Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect,' may not carry this especial meaning in their original utterance ; but no form of words could better convey the idea which it is the object of this essay to suggest and emphasize. Only as the will of man is at one with that of God can the highest and worthiest human life be realized.

It is, however, chiefly if not entirely in the sphere of morals that the righteousness and unrighteousness of man is manifested. And morals have to do with human conduct in society. This has been implied in our reference to the variability and changefulness of standards, as well as in the individual form and force of conscience. Morals and religion are frequently confused in thought ; but for the present we will endeavour to keep them distinct. Morality is social ; and how large

its range is may be seen from the purely social reference of any definite form of virtue or vice to which a special name is given. From this it may be seen that it covers the whole region of social disposition and behaviour but can hardly reach beyond.

Conceive of a man as a solitary being cut off from all relations with his kind and at once most of his actions cease to have any kind of moral significance. He can neither be negligent of his neighbour, nor kind, unkind, cruel, nor in any way injurious to him. He cannot even entertain these things in thought, for he has no neighbours to think about. A Robinson Crusoe is necessarily exempt from all moral claims and can only indulge them in thought from the play of his memory of times and conditions in which there was occasion for the culture of moral feelings and the performance of moral acts. He is alone ; so that for him morality ceases. No praise or blame can attach to anything he does or leaves undone except so far as concerns the possibility of his return to social life. But so soon as man Friday enters the sphere of Crusoe's life, morality at once springs into being : he is once more in society though it be only that of two persons ;

so that morality resumes its sway over him. We are moral because we are social.

If then human righteousness lie in man's proper adjustment with that order which in no sense originates with himself, but is the expression of the divine will alone, and if his righteousness or unrighteousness lie almost completely in the moral, that is to say, the social sphere, we must look for the divine order in this special region because it is here and almost only here that his conduct has that significance to which the terms right and wrong apply. Right must therefore have reference to social order and wrong to social disorder. But here the question becomes somewhat complex from the fact that there are limits within which we are free to make our own order, whilst there are limits which we cannot transgress. Unchangeable social elements we must regard as of the divine order and as in no sense lying under the dominance of our will.

It is surely not of our appointment that we are inevitably impelled to seek the fellowship of our kind. The social instinct is thus a primary factor of human life. That it reaches beyond us does not affect the question: with us, as well as with lower forms of

life, it is elementary ; we simply cannot live at all without some kind and degree of association. To say nothing of the fact that our personal derivation lies in the association of sex, which is the most primary and essential of all, we can make absolutely no progress in life except by the help which society brings. Children cannot be reared, none but the most elementary food, clothing, or shelter can be obtained without some if even the rudest form of associated labour, whilst civilized life speaks for itself. This condition is not of us : it is of God, just as all life with its evolutionary progress is also of him.

Neither is it of us that in proportion to the complexity of the social organism the necessity of truth and trustworthiness amongst the associated members becomes increasingly imperative. Society otherwise cannot be held together. It may be conceded that there is much untruth and untrustworthiness in the human world, whilst yet society does not break down altogether. Coercion partly supplies the place of truth. This does not negative the assertion that truth is the necessary bond of society. The mechanical laws of motion are absolutely true though they can never be exhibited in their simplicity.

The more you can reduce friction and remove external influence the more does motion approximate to the conditions laid down by the law. In like manner there is no human society in which this second principle has ever been or ever will be perfectly manifest; but for all that truth and trustworthiness are the social bond; and the stability of society is the measure of truth and trustworthiness amongst the members of the association.

Moreover if, apart from outside interference, society is to be enduring, its vital communal principle must be 'All for one and one for all.' That is to say, the individual must endeavour to find his private good in consistency with that of the commonwealth; and the community must see that the common good shall be the only limit to the free play of individual life. As in the case of our second principle, it is possible to contend that human history has never given a perfect example of such an association. But a similar answer may be given to this objection as before. It is an elementary law; and in proportion as we approach the conditions so will its truth be clear.

In addition to these elementary conditions, which are as it were the mechanical basis

of social life, there arises the mutual *kindly* disposition of the associated members. Logically we must place this after the birth of society; but whether it be a primitive factor or the product of simple kinship and neighbourly helpfulness hardly matters: it is inherent to the social relation, and under culture may grow into charity or communal love, blossoming into sympathy with suffering and fellowship in pleasure. But though capable of culture, as both reason and common sense shall afterwards dictate, it is really prior to all reason about or consciousness of its origin; it is virtually elementary.

Now these primitive elements concern us just in the same way as does natural law. They dominate us without in any way waiting for our knowledge or consent. They are present in the rudest and simplest social organism of which we have any knowledge. By the necessity of our nature we are social. By that same necessity the bond of society must be truth between the members who must subordinate the individual to the common good, leaving the individual free where the commonweal is not concerned. And the flower of the whole is that sense of kin or kindness which fruitens into highest per-

sonal well-being. With these elementary conditions we have no more to do than with the law of gravity or any other part of the order of nature: they are of God alone. The righteousness of God will be seen in their maintenance, whilst ours is our adjustment therewith.

But whilst these elementary social laws lie quite beyond our sphere of approval or disapproval we have yet a large liberty in the manner of our adaptation to and our use of them. Indeed the only restriction to our freedom is that our conventions and habits shall accord with these basic principles which are entirely out of our reach to change. We can tentatively choose the form of our institutions; and when these have served their ends, or have failed to promote them, we can modify them at will or change them altogether for others that contain a fairer promise of good. Within the limits above mentioned, our customs, laws, and forms of government lie absolutely at our will and pleasure.

It is not to be forgotten that in life, as it stands revealed in its historic forms, there are many greater or smaller social groups that stand apart from each other more or less

independently, sometimes in hostile rather than in friendly relations. The human family is not yet a social unit. Nations stand in hostile array; and, within narrower limits, classes are ranged against classes. Each, watching for its opportunity, seeks to interfere with the freedom of its neighbour, either in the maintenance of its own integrity or by making itself supreme, and imposing its own social form upon the other. We are, however, treating of the full-orbed social group, great or small, and endeavouring to determine the conditions of righteousness in the mutual conduct of the associated members. Within the limits of such social unit there is a range of action with regard to which, if the society is to endure, there can be no freedom at all. But beyond this there is a wide sphere into which essential morality does not enter. It may establish an absolute monarchy or limit the monarchic rule by a constitution. It may prefer an aristocratic, oligarchic, or a democratic form of government without in any way raising moral questions: only the *manner* of its establishment, maintenance, or change of form has any moral significance.

There are several historic varieties of family life; and a state of society has been conceived

—whether it has ever taken actual form or not is beside the present matter under consideration—in which this smaller and subordinate group has no place. Here also it is within the competence of the community to determine its own mode of life. The production of children, their training and equipment for that form of life to which society destines them, together with whatever may affect social necessities, conveniences, or pleasures are the concern of that society alone.

In considering such a matter it is difficult to refrain from taking an outside point of view. Being members of a specific group that stands alongside of others, we naturally ask which of these forms, whether of general government or the family, is best calculated to serve the ends of social life, and we should draw on our experience as well as compare the real or supposed issues of historic examples for the means of forming our judgment. For us under such circumstances moral problems would arise ; but only for us in relation to the ideals which we bring with us from an outer world. But as outsiders both we and our judgment are foreign to the argument. We are supposing ourselves within, not think-

ing of or remembering some outer order of things. Here we are free to institute such conventions as our supposed interest may direct. Our righteousness will consist in loyally accepting the fundamental conditions of social life, be its form what it may.

In order to show the difference in importance between the essential and the accidental in associated life let us examine two concrete cases.

First we will consider the question of truth and untruth. We have postulated truth as an irreversible condition of all social existence. Yet there are numerous instances in which the practice of deception is supposed to be natural and even necessary.

In war each opposing general does his best to outwit his enemy, and is held to be justified not only by his own people but even by the nation against whom he contends. Here we have deception and practical untruth which are a violation of the very first principle of social life. But in such a case we are dealing with not one community but two, in each of which its own interests are paramount. To many persons in both communities alike the war will be a most pitiful thing, and all these may be expected to do their utmost to

assuage its pains and horrors for both parties of combatants. No doubt there is wrong somewhere or these two nations would not be at war, but the wrong lies in a higher and wider plane than the life of each separate group. For our purpose we must regard the war as inevitable, and each general is bound to the interests of his own nation to the exclusion of all that is alien. He may not deceive his own people, except that even here it may be necessary to keep his plans entirely secret ; but he not only may, he is expected to do all he can to outwit his opponents.

The same thing is expected on the other side, nor is there any disposition on either part to blame the other for successful deception. Each general is like a chess-player who must win the game if he can, but only by lawful moves. What are these lawful or unlawful moves in war depends on international treaties and obligations with which we are not now concerned. If the conduct of war is conditioned in this way, then within these recognized limits the opposing nations retrograde to that habit of life where the natural struggle between competing races prevails.

A bird has been known to pretend to a

broken wing to lure an enemy from the near neighbourhood of its nest. The deceived boy admired the bird's wit and laughed at his own befoolment. Defensive deceit is the natural response to the offensive lure, bait, or trap, and both are in instinctive accord with life in the wider world where both hunter and hunted have their natural place ; for both offence and defence are based on the racial peculiarities of the opposed groups.

It is possible that we have here a clue to the significance of a very common complaint against subject races, against whom it is charged by their masters that they are apparently incapable of truth—that they either conceal from their superiors what the latter desire to know, or flatter the alien by answering in a way supposed to be most agreeable to his wishes. In view of this general and oft repeated charge it would be well to inquire further whether these subject races are as untruthful amongst themselves as they are said to be in relation to their masters. It would seem that frank and simple truth is a virtue of the free and independent, whilst untruth is the natural outgrowth of fear, suspicion, dependence, or forceful subjection. It seems to be a natural

shelter from expected harm or an active form of hostility against a known enemy. It may take many generations of free life to outgrow a so long inbred habit of untruth to the stranger.

This, however, only emphasizes the fact that we are here standing outside the one community in which alone the full law of truth can be expected to be fulfilled. We may come to that sometime ; but as yet we have only reached the stage in which it is held to be immoral and disgraceful to violate a definite treaty between nations without obtaining the consent of all parties concerned in it, or spring harmful surprises on those who are trustfully living at peace with us. But this shows that the nations are looking for that wider common life in which truth shall prevail. Already some progress has been made in the creation and development of international law, so that even war has been made subject to certain conditions other than mere wit or brute force. These new conditions demand truth and loyalty to accepted principles in the comity of nations.

When therefore Christianity demands that we speak the truth to all in love it summons us to a life above all local and racial barriers,

at least so far as such severance renders truth and goodwill impossible. That is to say, the laws, customs, and interests of separate social groups are to be caught up into a higher order where truth shall have its widest expression. As yet, however, there cannot be truth when hostility prevails. So that generals must outwit generals with the approval of all combatants, but on the cessation of war the demand for truth becomes once more common.

But in what precisely consists the righteousness of truth and the unrighteousness of untruth? Is it that the one is pleasing and the other displeasing to God? This is the usual religious answer; and, provided radical social law be regarded as the expression of his will, this answer is entirely sufficient. For the present, however, it is better to say that truth is the necessary bond of social order, and that untruth is the solvent of that bond, the destruction of that trust and confidence by which alone men and women can form any community at all. Here then the foundation of social righteousness is laid bare, and whether we express it in religious or secular terms it comes to the same thing. Therefore it is that if a man swear even to his own hurt he must keep his word unless he has pre-

viously obtained the willing consent of those to whom his word has been pledged.

It is not otherwise with nations. The conduct of Rome both at Candium and Numantia was wrong because it tended to make trust in any future treaty impossible. Fraud or failure to keep faith is disastrous to the credit necessary to trade. A liar may not be trusted unless in any given event it is his manifestly present interest to speak the truth. In no case can such a man be honest. The exigences of life do indeed give rise to not a few occasions of casuistry which need not here be discussed. The difference of opinion which they elicit only shows the degree of readiness with which in special cases the value of the irrevocable law of truth as the social bond is or is not accepted. But even in cases of admittedly extreme urgency, let it only be known that a man's word is not to be trusted in the last extremity, the consequent mistrust is not only a blow to his personal reputation, but so far forth as it becomes known and imitated the solidity of the social edifice is proportionately undermined. We may, and some do, take liberties with truth, but we have no freedom to do so, because it is not of us that trust-

worthiness is the necessary basis of any and every form of social life. The proverb has it that there must be honour even amongst thieves.

Secondly let us consider the case of polygamy, which must be allowed to lie within the sphere of freedom—not, of course, in the liberty of an individual member of a monogamous society, but within the right of any independent group to adopt. Amongst Christians monogamy is the normal rule of civilization. But that polygamy is not radically inconsistent with virtue is clear from the existence of communities in which without reproach or sense of shame this mode of life prevails. To be sure, even here monogamy must be the prevailing rule from the general numerical equality of the sexes. But war and other circumstances bear more hardly on the male than on the female, at least with respect to numerical relations. It must sometimes happen that social questions arise, the solution of which in polygamous communities will be very different from what obtains where monogamy is the rule. The protection and honourable support of women who are left without the chance of mating, and the procreation of children to fill up the thinned

ranks of the men, are amongst the most apparent needs in all nations. We Westerns solve these problems by conventual celibacy, by fitting the women to earn an independent living without male help, and by a *laissez faire* with sometimes disastrous consequences. We can see the evils attendant on the practice of polygamy, but our monogamous rule is not free from difficulties of its own which are no less serious.

Moreover we easily read without offence the stories of family life in polygamous households, specially those given in the familiar scriptures. We are not much troubled even by the existence of concurrent concubinage when it forms part of a definitely recognized order of society. We become indignant when, at the instance of Sarah's jealousy, Abraham behaves shabbily and cruelly to Hagar and her son. It does not disturb us that Jacob had two wives and that some of his sons had concubines for their mothers, even with the approval of the legitimate wives. We are content that no difference, on that ground, is made to the rank which these sons of concubinage take in the pedigrees of Israel. Of course it is understood that we are not committed to the historicity of these narratives ;

we are only concerned with the ethical conditions under which these social arrangements were blamelessly accepted.

The offence of Solomon was not so much the abnormal extent of his harem as his diversion from the practice of monotheistic Jahvism. And here let us recall a most pathetic passage in Isaiah iv. 1 where it is said, 'In that day'—the day in which the men shall fall by the sword and the mighty in war—'seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, "we will eat our own bread and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name to take away our reproach."' The fact that we read, without moral shock, of the customary polygamy of Mohammedanism is proof that though, from our standpoint, we regard the practice as a mark of lower civilization we do not regard it as immoral. It may even be presumed that the adherents of this social system could find much to say in its defence against the strictures of Christian moralists. And there are not a few amongst us who regret that in the programme of our missionary activity this difference of ethical custom should not be allowed for and condoned. This has probably been one of the reasons for the lim-

itation of Christian success amongst peoples of another type of historic development.

The meaning of all which is that, speaking in general terms, there are two planes of social law and conduct, the divine and human. In the former we are bound by conditions from which there can be no escape; whilst in the latter we have a large liberty to shape our institutions as we please—we, that is to say the community in its corporate capacity, not the separate individuals thereof: essential righteousness lies with the former, not with the latter. Not for an instant can we regard Jacob's deceit to obtain the birthright as on a level with his practice of polygamy and concubinage. The former struck at the very roots of any and every kind of social well-being, whilst the latter belonged to a recognized social usage that was neither questioned nor even questionable under the real or supposed conditions then prevalent. It is quite conceivable that under possible circumstances polygamy might be a better than our own solution of certain social problems, but Jacob's deceit is capable of no moral justification at all. The two things lie in totally different planes, are wholly and essentially diverse the one from the other.

The one relates to unalterable social conditions; the other has to do with our convenience, or a variable knowledge and perception of issues comparable with our manifold adaptation to the laws of nature.

Thus there are things in the social life of man that we can no more change or question than we can alter the operation of natural law. On the other hand, there are things that we may adopt or modify as shall seem good to ourselves. Laws, customs, and modes of government are amongst the latter; the manner in which we allow and use them is righteous or otherwise according as we do or do not adjust ourselves to the fundamental order which God has established. It is precisely here that so large a part of human right or wrong is made manifest. There is but one righteousness and it is that of God who at the heart of all things energizes all, to all limits of existence in an order that may not be broken. There is also a human righteousness, and it is our willing conformity with that of God: beside this there can be none other. No variability of human standards, no difference of degree in cultured conscience, however inevitable these may be, can have any bearing on its real qualities or its range.

IV

THE CULTURE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

HAVING inquired into the nature and foundation of righteousness we have found :—

1. That it is conduct which is in harmony with an invariable standard and purpose, and this we have assumed to be ultimately resolvable into an expression of the will of God.

2. That for him and ourselves alike this righteousness is the same, with this only important difference :—

(*a*) That whereas God must keep strictly to the order which he and none other has ordained,

(*b*) So far as it concerns us, we have to keep to that same order with whose appointment and sustenance we neither have had nor, in the nature of things, can have anything whatever to do. We can neither create such end for ourselves nor

escape or even modify the essential conditions under which we are called to live.

That with this sole difference the righteousness of God and man are one and the same, nor, consistent with this righteousness, is the order on which it rests subject to revision or alteration.

3. That this divine order includes us and all our interests, but we have no reason to suppose that we are its sole end and aim.

4. That there is yet a wide range of freedom left us. Provided we obtain for ourselves a real adjustment to essential conditions, we are otherwise free to conduct our life according to our best intelligence as to our own conceived good and happiness.

Now with this necessary adjustment in view we come face to face with the most serious of all our problems, the culture of righteousness.

For temporary convenience let us distinguish two parts of the divine order as Natural and Moral, remembering that they are both natural or both moral according to the point of view from which they are regarded. The moral is natural because it is part of the same divine and unchangeable order ; and the natural is also moral because

it stands as a kind of compact or covenant between God and all dependent existence. His very character as righteous is concerned in its regular and inviolable maintenance. But for convenience in this discussion let us say that the *natural* means that vast range of divine activity which has no exclusive relation to human life and which we usually summarize under the phrase 'Laws of Nature.' By the *moral* we mean that part of the general order in which we are placed in our human relations as a social organism. In both respects a man's conduct may be praiseworthy or culpable, but it is chiefly in the moral that it is subject to appraisement.

Now nothing is wanting to our eagerness to become acquainted with and adapt ourselves to the order of nature. In all directions the finest culture is employed for the advancement and utilization of knowledge. To some, merely to know is a largely sufficing reward. Others desire the power which its possession confers for personal objects or public well-being, but the vast majority are those who stand ready to seize on the results of other men's labour. To some the beauty of pure science, to others its use and fruits. In the arts of life no patience fails in the

endeavour to know the conditions of success ; there is the utmost hardihood in conducting dangerous experiments. Already some two hundred persons have lost their lives in the endeavour to master the air as we have done the sea. The dreary wastes of both polar regions have been invaded merely to see what is there. We dredge the seas and scale the loftiest mountains to add a few lines to a book. We frequent the haunts of pestilent disease that we may learn to master it. Years of the best lives are devoted to obscure branches of science on the chance of their having some useful bearing on practical human interests ; nor is there anywhere the least sign of opening in the boundaries of knowledge but that some will be found to risk everything in its exploration. Thus new sciences are added to the old, and old ones enlarge their borders, and all this that the knowledge of nature may add something to the decorative or material enrichment of life.

Of course hundreds of mistakes are made, losses encountered, and catastrophes endured. What then ? Failures are but the signs of 'no thoroughfare' which by a process of elimination shut us in to a final success, if

not in respect of the object sought for, then in the discovery of the unexpected; as Columbus sailed westwards for India and stumbled on America. To be sure all mistakes, blunders, and failures have to be paid for; but so far from complaining of the price we blame our want of foresight, our carelessness, or lack of skill; yet others step forward from the ranks of aspirants to honour or reward, hoping to succeed where we have failed. The death of two officers of the Army Aeroplane Corps did not prevent others from immediately attempting the same dangerous task, nor is it likely that the addition of these last to the fatal list would have prevented others from the perilous venture.

In these successive misadventures no one dreams of blaming the order of nature, or even wishes that it were other than it is; for the absolute certainty we possess in this direction is precisely the ground of all hope of ultimate success. It is recognized that all that is needed is our personal adjustment, and this we are determined to obtain at any and every cost. Only those who remain in the pre-scientific stage of development object to learn or fail to obey with promptitude. Let a man solidly lay his foundations, build

with fit materials and with adequate skill, his house will stand as firm as the rock upon which it is built.

He may, of course, choose to build unsoundly, not from ignorance of the laws of his craft but from a full knowledge of them. He may wish the house to last for a special time more or less carefully defined, it is to serve a temporary or perhaps some rascally dishonest purpose : but even so, with possibly fraudulent intent, he is availing himself of the known unalterable character of the laws of nature Within that sphere he has conformed to the law of God alike for strength or weakness, with personal honour or dishonour, and so far forth the issue will justify him. The impregnable baronial castle of the Middle Ages, and the row of jerry-built houses of a modern London suburb, are alike amenable to the same laws. Be our moral intentions what they may, if we do perfectly get into harmony with these natural laws we may harness to the chariot of our desires the very forces of omnipotence with the absolute certainty of reaching those ends that lie within the scope of the laws we have invoked. In this direction there is no difficulty whatever of inducing men to be 'reconciled to God.'

Our sole hesitation and perplexity fall within the moral sphere, and the reason for this is obvious. All morality is social; and to be righteous a man must cultivate the social virtues and their appropriate habits, for it is precisely here that our righteousness or our unrighteousness is revealed.

It has already been observed that every vice and every virtue to which a name can be given has some special reference to the well-being of our neighbours. And by far the greatest ills we suffer, the mistakes we make, the sins we commit, and all their consequent unhappiness, arise simply from our imperfect adjustment to elemental moral laws. We are social beings, and yet of such individualistic instinct that we would have somehow the social constitution altered or even abrogated in our personal favour. We not seldom behave as if moral law were but a human convention which we may set aside at will. With this result that the consequent confusion is charged against the plan of the world and is made the subject of complaint against God. We have to learn that the natural and the moral are of equal validity and inner force, and that the appropriate issues of both have separately the same inevitability.

Of course we must remember that there is a certain amount of social effort in the natural sphere. We cannot go far single-handed in rendering natural law subservient to individual purpose. We supplement our personal knowledge by that of others. Successive generations are ever adding something to the common store. One art subserves another, and the division of labour becomes increasingly minute. But though every one of us is somehow involved in social activity the mental attitude of a man is not therefore moral in disposition. He may, and often does, avail himself of the co-operation of others precisely as he would use any other kind of natural force. It was once quite common, in selling an estate, to reckon the number of human beings on that estate as part of the property. It was like so much water power to a mill, or as any other advantageous natural force. A mill owner has been known to speak of his ' hands ' as if the men and women employed were mere parts of a machine. And in many ways we utilize the common social activities as a man will use the natural force of wind or water as motive powers.

Let us for a moment consider this matter

from the personal point of view. We shall then see wherein lies the great difficulty of moral culture.

What happens before we arrive at self-consciousness we need not discuss, except to note the fact that out of this previous unconsciousness we bring a large amount of racial experience which we call instinct, and which very specially expresses itself in acts of self-preservation and self-interest. Of course we do not always know where our real self-interest lies nor how best to preserve ourselves. But then instinct does not wait for knowledge. Its action is very largely automatic, and the springs thereof must biologically be more remote than those which induce social action for self-interest and self-preservation. We have gone a long way in the social direction, but the more ancient instinct still remains a persistent and potent force which can only be brought into subordination by ages of racial social experience or by a prudent discipline which has that end definitely in view.

Naturally we are self-centred and are the centre of all the world we know. As our first experience enlarges we become conscious of limits, of which some are so painful that

we fear and avoid them, as in the case of physical pain where 'a burnt child fears the fire.' Otherwise, parents, friends, and the many attractive things of the world exist for us alone. But even here, sooner or later, we discover that there are limits beyond which our effective egotism does not pass. Parents and others have worlds of their own. And though for a time they may generously yield to our demands, we come at length to the parting of the ways: they refuse longer to be at our sole disposal. The attractive things of the world are as much desired by them as by ourselves; and we can now obtain the objects of our desire only by their consent or co-operation, which may be granted only so far as their own interests are not involved.

We come thus into collision with the wills of others who, having their own necessities or inclinations, see no sufficient reason why they should yield to us any more than that we should give way to them. We may be stronger than they and forcibly seize on what we desire; or being more cunning we secure our ends by guile. Or the reverse may happen. We being the weaker or less guileful must give way to others against our own will.

This personal restriction irks and offends us. And though we may hereafter be induced to make allowance for the natural desires of other people we never entirely get rid of the wish to have our own way. Nor do we ever quite accept the fact that, contrary to all self-seeming, we are not really the centre of all things. Other people are the centres of their own world of which we are a part, just as they are a part of ours. And if we could detach ourselves from our egotistic attitude these others would seem to have the same right and title to their worlds as we to ours. So that instead of the external world being one great circle or sphere of which we are the centre, there are innumerable such spheres in close contiguity, each having its own living centre and all pressing upon one another with greater or less power of resistance.

Moreover these several spheres are not of the rigid geometric order that, touching at one point only, leave unoccupied spaces between, nor even of the merely elastic give-and-take order which by pressure may be made to occupy all the space. The radii of each sphere pass beyond their own and across the circumference of all others with such living

interpenetration that all are proportionably affected.

Now it takes a long time to arrive at a fair appreciation of these our personal limitations. We may observe, however, that in large families of children reared together, still more in a fairly large school, notwithstanding considerable varieties of disposition, this lesson is much sooner learned than in a small family; whilst the child that is reared and educated in seclusion hardly learns it at all except under the rough experience of later and unprotected life. In all cases, however, it is a most serious business which sooner or later must be undertaken; and those who remember its beginning will readily acknowledge the rude awakening occasioned by the inevitable conflict of his own with the wills of other people.

The difficulty for us all lies in our ignorance or neglect of the fundamental conditions of social life. We forget that we are born into society, and from the first are destined to live with our kind. From this fact alone all our morals arise. Our clamant personal desires are at all times natural enough; but where they conflict with the equally valid desires of our neighbours, they have to be

moderated, and ought to be controlled rather by inner direction than by outer force. Much is conceded to children, but childish claims may not be carried too far on in life. We must not only cease to cry for the moon or any other evident impossibility, but we have to recognize the proper limits of our will in competition with our fellows. So far from being an easy thing some of us have never succeeded, if even we have ever attempted, this most necessary task of self-discipline. Yet, whether it be through the experience of common life or by the worthiest teaching of our masters, this is what must happen if we are to be brought into line with our kind and made to understand that no social being can be altogether a law unto himself.

Speaking generally, this is our position. We are not trained in the absolute certainty of moral issues as we are in the case of natural law. In the moral sphere these issues seem to be remote, whilst in the natural they appear to be immediate and can be tested in the laboratory. But is this really the case? An imperfectly adjusted machine may do its work for a time, but sooner or later it will knock itself to pieces; and this issue is strictly proportioned to the amount

of its failure in truth of adjustment. Perfect adjustment means easy and silent movement, whilst din and clatter are the evidence and measure of its defect. So in human relations untruth may temporarily pass for truth and be for a time unnoticed ; but in proportion as truth fails so does society tend to resolve itself into unsocial elements and fall to pieces.

Nor have we sufficient confidence in or submission to those who essay to instruct us, whereas in practical mechanics we are content to serve a long and severe apprenticeship. Even with moral discipline, where we have it at all, the resulting adjustment must be due to the free acceptance of each individual or it fails of its true end. In a hive of bees or any group of social animals this adjustment to its future social existence has taken place before the individual came into existence. It has become an hereditary instinct which urges every member of the group to do at once and precisely all that is necessary to fulfil the law of his being. There is no apparent reluctance to do with absolute self-devotion and at the fitting time all those things which nature and circumstance require ; and this will continue so long as the

social bond continues to exist. With man this is not so. We have indeed the instinct of self-preservation ; but this is very largely individual in character, and we have not yet carried it far on the plane of our moral life.

Moreover both we and our would-be instructors are in the same present confusion together : each makes his own contribution thereto. We see untruth and selfishness abound and may even keenly suffer from their prevalence, but instead of standing in arrest of this disintegrating tendency we add to its volume by being drawn into competition on these unsocial and immoral principles.

Does the following soliloquy appear to be much exaggerated ?

' Why should I be the one to make a beginning and suffer disadvantage that others will not share ? If others are untrue to their word why should I be expected to keep mine ? Why must I supply goods in trade strictly up to sample or advertisement when others do not ? The general public are too busy or too inexpert to know the difference, or are even too much involved in the same practices to have any right of complaint. Before the matter can become serious I shall have made my fortune without appreciable

damage to anyone, and may retire without anyone being the wiser. If there be danger of premature detection I must try to cover up my tracks so as to escape exposure. Other people do these things, and no one is the worse for it, or if suspected they are called clever and smart. At any rate "Caveat emptor" is the law of business.'

Or again, 'Exposure may not come in my time, and the next generation may take care of itself if by that time any interest in the matter should remain. Besides, there is a sort of statute of limitation even to fraud, especially if a fairly long interval intervene. People easily condone the false foundation of an ancient fortune, and a grandfather or even a father may be considered an ancestor.

'Moreover, is not deceit in one way or another part of the general scheme of things? Lures, baits, changes of form and colour, with masks of varied kinds prevail in all the lower ranges of life, whilst illusion suffuses the whole atmosphere of human perception. Why complain if I obey the universal law? We are all at war with one another, and the prizes naturally go to the victor. Of what avail can it be to attempt to alter nature? The fittest will surely survive.'

Now when conscience sometimes disturbs our complacency, we are apt to take refuge in a sort of genial haze in which perspective fails and objects cease to be clean-edged. We are even relieved that we cannot be quite sure of the boundaries of truth and untruth, honesty and dishonesty ; and of this grateful uncertainty we take the benefit of the doubt with no little inward satisfaction.

Or again we soliloquize :—'How can we be sure that society, to which we are expected to surrender our personal interests, will care directly for the individual, i.e., ourselves ? Of course we all can and do derive benefit from the order which society creates ; but individually we are left very much out of count. The social organism makes many and great demands and gathers many resources which are spent without much consideration for its constituent members. All this naturally disinclines one from personal sacrifice to public service when so little comes back to the individual.

'Moreover, there are many persons who can justly claim to be more capable than their fellow citizens. Or by the fortunate accidents of birth, education, and opportunity they come into the enjoyment of certain ad-

vantages quite naturally and innocently. Is all this personal equipment to be foregone for unknown persons or an indefinite multitude? Even if these things are a social bestowment, we were not personally in view when they were conferred. Therefore we can hardly feel such indebtedness to society as to acknowledge its claims now to dispose of them without our consent. They are mere social derelicts: they are the unintentional side issues of social activity, an overflow from its own life which would have been wasted if we had not found a use for it. As we have done, so let others do. Let them utilize the overflow and side issues of our activity; to these they are heartily welcome, but they should hardly desire more.

'And further, it is manifest that we have not yet arrived at any common idea of what is or is not necessary to the commonweal. Let society make up its mind as to what is really desirable before it demands the suppression of the individual or the entire control of his activity in its own favour. Even were such a common ideal in view who shall say that it would be consistently maintained? The weariness of continued effort is apt to be followed by change in the objects

of desire. A popular government has always to expect a change of common feeling, not less when the public has been satiated with good service than when it has suffered grievous disappointment. The work of one generation is often undervalued by the next, nor is there any certainty that what is now quite eagerly desired shall not be displaced by something else that has no greater chance of permanence.

'Finally, society has large force at its command and by means of it has produced the present state of things. Undeniably, great progress has been made which no individual efforts or self-sacrifice could have achieved. Why then not let matters proceed as at present? We shall all accept accomplished facts, though they may not be altogether agreeable. Let public law prescribe the ends to be attained, leaving the individual to work within the rules laid down, so that under the guidance of this public expression he may pursue his own lawful interests. In the end such procedure will secure the greatest advantage to common life.'

Now it is not pretended that such argumentation is altogether unsound. And though some of it is specious, it is from the

individual's point of view very natural. It probably not unfairly represents the common trend of thought, but the spirit of the whole is distinctly unsocial and is therefore immoral.

It may here be necessary to interpose an explanation that we are not using the term socialism and similar words with any kind of reference to the economic schemes that bear that name. We are dealing only with the fact that we all do, and even the most pronounced individualist must, live within some form of social organization. All that we are concerned with are those elementary and unalterable conditions under which any kind or form of society can possibly exist. The varied utopias proposed may well deserve the fullest examination and may afford an instructive and healthy stimulus; but no such scheme concerns us. The form of social life under which we live is not relevant to the present discussion, nor is it of the first importance. As a rule we have no choice in the matter, for we come under the law of natural domicile with regard to nationality and, in a minor degree, with regard to subordinate groups within the nation, religious or other.

Our problem is simply this, how to induce the individual with his great heritage of primitive self-preserving instincts to accept with loyalty those fundamental laws on which the social life, for which he is destined, is based. Clearly some individual limitations are necessary. Society itself, be its form what it may, will take care of that. But in an examination of this kind we need to know what the unalterable social conditions are, so that those who desire to be righteous may so far as possible shape their lives accordingly.

Now all this is the more difficult as we find ourselves in daily contact with those who are in the same mental confusion as ourselves. Thus a social *vis inertiæ* is produced upon which self-reforming energy beats itself in vain. The fates of prophetic teachers, confessors, and martyrs in common life seem to stand as warnings against our personal adjustment, as well as against the attempt to reform the world without its own consent. And yet as things are we have to start with ourselves against the ordinary currents and the massive social tides of our day, and perhaps alone.

Alone! ah, for the ordinary man, 'there's

the rub.' He is called, not by an outer authority which can take cognizance only of the crudest things, but by an inner sense of loyalty to the supremacy of laws to which he cannot refuse his intellectual homage, but to which his primitive instincts are opposed. He must abandon all conscious untruth and loyally adhere to truth even when in the now pressing instance it may entail pain and failure of cherished aims. To the best of his ability he has to determine whether the business by which he does actually or by which he proposes to earn his livelihood is essentially honourable, and whether he does actually or intends to conduct it honourably. Shall it be in itself a real contribution to social well-being or merely a specious form of parasitism that adds nothing to lawful commerce or the innocent pleasures of society? And these questions he must face in the vastly more difficult case of providing for the future of his children.

Is business to be a mere case of grab-all without consideration for the independent activities of smaller but honest and capable men? Is he to drag others into shady or dishonest service by blind leading or by open pressure, or through the agency of others of

known evil propensity will he do or allow to be done for him things whereof he would be ashamed to have commonly known? Shall he utilize his superior knowledge or other accidental advantage so as to deprive the other party in a business transaction of a fair share of the profit? As master or servant will he maintain his honour unsullied on the one hand by refraining from the undue use of his power over the interest of his subordinate, or on the other will he be faithful to his trust without surrendering his free manhood? In short, will he endeavour to take his true place as a member of society, cultivating goodwill to all men, seeking his own good in theirs and theirs in his: and all this whether he be joined by others or stand in solitude.

This surely is what is meant by 'following after righteousness.' And in this quest no other way lies open than through an adequate personal adjustment to the permanent and universal order of God, which in this direction is moral because it is social. We may well believe that here also we shall find our highest happiness. But it is righteousness first and last. Whether happiness shall or shall not be included depends on our dis-

position towards the order in which we are called to live. There is no righteousness apart from the order, whilst the pursuit of happiness as an end apart from righteousness is by universal experience an utterly illusive thing.

Now all this needs a very careful and continuous discipline. Not so much by an appeal to outer authority, whether parental, magisterial, or priestly, but rather by making clear the inevitabilities of the moral order. It is true that outer aid can come only through persons who, whatever their excellencies, are largely under the dominance of the same personal interests as ourselves and breathe the same atmosphere of self-seeking. But then, in these matters, the most and the least wise of us are, if not in the same grade, all learners together. Nor need any man, be he priest, master, or servant, shrink from the frank acknowledgment of much personal failure. Any assumption, or pretence of infallibility, is not only sure to be found out, but must prevent those sympathetic relations through which the more mature may help the less.

Our soliloquizing friend seems most afraid of standing alone. No doubt that, to most

of us, solitary and independent action or mode of life is an appalling difficulty; yet we may well believe that it is greater in appearance than it really is. For supposing these fundamental laws are made known to all, their common appeal will surely find more than a solitary response.

Something similar to this is well known in the modern controversy of Free Trade. 'If,' say its opponents, 'all nations would fairly join in it we agree to the excellence of the doctrine, but until they do we cannot attempt it.' The implied idea being that in the society of trading nations it is too great a risk to adopt a solitary home policy without the concurrence of foreign partners in the trade. Yet the solitary free trading nation does not stand alone. Even in protectionist countries many powerful voices are raised in favour of what is yet but a solitary example. To say that meantime the free trading nation neither despairs of itself nor is wholly convinced of its present disadvantage is beyond our present argument. What is really pertinent in the present case is that no man really stands alone. The same call which comes to him comes to all who have knowledge of the great social laws. Not a few in

all ages and nations have made and do continue to make the appropriate response at their own solitary risk, and whilst their personal cost may scare an admiring multitude, their exemplary hardihood becomes an inspiration to after generations.

There were probably many who in Athens thought Socrates a fool for standing in solitary protest for the maintenance of constitutional law. Not only were there noble apologists for this lonely man in his own day but there is a growing appreciation of his public service wherever his story is known. In our own land John Hampden was no doubt thought by many persons to be a foolhardy man in opposing the collection of ship-money beyond the area of its legal imposition. For all that, his solitary action rallied an indignant nation to his side, and its further issue was the final overthrow of autocratic government in England.

Without referring to more august examples of solitary daring we may remember that there are many men in humble circumstances to-day who are and remain poor not from lack of those personal qualities that elsewhere lead to success but from their loyalty to accepted principles of common morality.

They are content in that noble fashion that leads them to work strictly within their personal resources which involves no risk to confiding friends, and incurs no obligations that sap their own manhood. They are punctiliously trustworthy in positions where there is strong temptation to abuse their trust for personal advantage. That is to say, there is a vast amount of solid honesty and sense of honour in common life, and sometimes where one would hardly expect to find it. How then can anyone attempt to excuse his own weakness or cowardice on the plea of loneliness, when so much moral hardihood appears in so many directions and can surely be matched even in his own class, whatever that class may be ?

As to the sufficiency of legal force and direction, may one not observe that the institution of law and its successive amendments arise precisely from the continuous need which society discovers for improved relations ? Law has condemned and punishes theft. Every one knows what is meant by theft ; but because the law is bound to define it there are many unfaithful citizens who are on the look out to stand just outside the definition and do that which the law

condemns. There are many who would not commit highway robbery, burgle a house, forge the signature of his neighbour, or destroy a will, who would have no hesitation in misleading a simple and ignorant person to that person's damage and their own advantage. The law would discourage betting and gambling ; but the difficulty of enforcing this is so great that the law is reduced to the mere refusal to acknowledge the validity of a gambling debt. Then, forsooth, personal honour steps in and acknowledges the debt by paying it before and often to the prejudice of lawful creditors. Laws are good and necessary ; but he who would be a just man must live above all mere rules against rogues.

Now social confusion does not arise from a complete absence of moral feeling in the common mind, but rather because it usually finds expression in sectional terms. We have therefore class morals whose currency is almost strictly limited to the group to which the individual belongs. The morality of the master is not quite that of the man, nor does that of the man cover quite the same ground as that of the master. There may be elements that are common, but there is a good deal

that is not so. It is not merely a difference of point of view that causes one sense of right to prevail in the kitchen and another in the drawing-room. Employer and employed stand over against each other in this kind of sectional morality, as do the buyer and the seller, the propertied classes and the proletariat; whilst in his private capacity a man may be a just and considerate employer, and quite a different person when he becomes a member of some firm or trading company. Real or pretended partnership in business has become proverbial for the facility which it affords to each partner for evading some inconvenient though just claim to humane consideration. Hence in any question arising between persons of opposed interests, an outsider, if he have competent knowledge, will give a fairer judgment than either of the parties themselves. All which shows that there is no great lack of a sense of right in the general mind so much as a common currency.

A story used to be current in Canada as to the way in which the Dominion Capital was chosen. There were several cities of importance of which each had some special claims to the honour: Quebec for historic

association, Montreal for its commercial importance, Toronto for its situation, and others for their several reasons. Not being able to agree amongst themselves the question was referred to the Home Government in London. Now British statesmen had not then the best of reputations for proficiency in geography, and least of all in that of the great dependencies of the Crown. They therefore very wisely referred the matter back to these competing cities with this question to each of them: 'If your city were necessarily excluded, which of the others would you suggest?' Now inter-colonial jealousy was very strong on this point, so that each city determined against all the others thus: 'If not Quebec, then Ottawa; if not Montreal, then Ottawa'; and the same answer came from each of the competitors. At this time Ottawa was a mere lumber station of the backwoods, of absolutely no promise or significance whatever. But Ottawa was chosen for the new Capital with the ensuing consent of all the provinces.

Now above all the confusions of society there is one voice that might be expected to be absolutely authoritative in enforcing

the laws of God so far as they affect the essentials of common life: it is that of religion. But then religion has suffered a very great misfortune. It has become enmeshed in institutionalism of varied forms, each of which has developed a morality of its own which has no universal currency. No doubt, institutionalism has occasionally rendered important social service. But through its specialized forms it has become largely parochial in its range and has become mixed up with matters that, in the highest sense, are not religious at all. It has asserted claims to authority for which in reason and in fact there is but the slightest foundation. It has turned the non-essential into the essential, and has claimed to give sanction to social customs which do not need its support, whilst it has contested others which it has no right to touch. Many religious observances border on superstition, and stand for ideas that belong to occultism. With many noble exceptions, neither its ministers nor laity can claim to be of higher moral conduct than some outside religious organizations. The voice of religion has therefore been uncertain in its utterance and not of that impartial and authoritative character so necessary in an arbiter.

Consider for a moment the present controversy of religious versus secular education, which never need have arisen had the advocates of religion strictly kept to their own business. For what is religion but reverence for the Eternal and obedience to his law: all else is but institutional overgrowth. If an 'Atmosphere' is desired, and it is surely a great and common need, what other can there be than reverence for law as the expression of the unchangeable will of God? Why then burden common religion with metaphysics which are not only beyond the range of general intelligence, and not seldom beyond that of the clergy, but are confessedly the means of dividing the nation into antipathetic classes? The *raison d'être* of a religious organization is to cultivate the knowledge of God through those changeless persistencies which stand revealed in nature and human society, and to encourage its members in obedience to them by mutual help. If such an association feels any call to mission enterprise, it can properly aim at nothing other than extending this knowledge of God, and inculcating this same obedience.

On the other hand, no secularist, if he be

a good citizen, would wish that education should have no other end than mere success in professional or business life irrespective of the means of achieving it. To get on should be a fair and clean ambition, and to be this it must be righteous; and nothing less than this can give satisfaction even to realized ambition. But both parties to this controversy are lop-sided. The advocates of religion have so encumbered the matter with inappropriate elements that, in sheer urgency of protest, secularists have been driven into enmity to religion, whereas they have only meant to oppose the impertinent adjuncts of institutional religion.

Now if we may separate religion from its institutional forms, which has surely been done by many of the noblest men, and by none more completely than by Jesus Christ, and if we may mean by it a hearty and loyal reverence for that august Power and Presence which in many ways and with varied intelligence we all acknowledge, then we have here precisely that steadying motive which may best help us over our moral dead points and sustain us in our personal weakness when claims are urged which, though painfully inconvenient, we know to be absolutely valid.

For present convenience we have allowed the distinction between moral and natural law. But in reality there is no such division. We distinguish, because natural law covers a larger area than humanity, and carries its urgency so much in evidence that, so far as we know it, we gladly get into accord with it ; whereas our initiation into the moral is the more deferred because the issues seem more remote, and in our ignorance and selfishness we are not indisposed to accept risks. We therefore take liberties where no freedom properly exists. We need to feel that, as they issue from the same source, they have the same urgency behind them and the same inevitability of issue. They are alike independent of our trust or distrust, our obedience or disobedience ; and they find their fulfilment in either.

There are thus two directions in which we need special training and discipline.

1. Godwards ; because we live within his inviolable order : here is our domicile, for, as the Apostle Paul says, ' In him we live and move and have our being.' That order also is kindly, for we are also ' his offspring.' And as this stable natural and moral order is the only ground on which human righteous-

ness, goodness, and happiness can rest, we need above all things to cultivate that personal disposition which shall express itself in a glad and reverent obedience to God whom that order reveals. Here surely is the province and function of religion. By direct teaching and, if this be in common assembly, by some appropriately simple and symbolic form of worship, we may be helped to keep in reverent, personal, and kindly touch with God. For our righteousness lies only in harmony with his will, and most especially where it is revealed in the essentials of morality. But no harmony is possible without a large sense of kindliness; and it is religion that should show us the way.

2. Manwards; because of necessity we belong to society with whose members our personal lives must be co-ordinated for the common and individual good. And, having learned what are the ultimate elements of social life, we need a discipline of behaviour in respect of those accidental matters wherein as a community we are free to adopt our own mode of life. We are to remember that it is not a freedom for the individual to do always and everywhere what he pleases. He is a member of a society and, at least in im-

portant accidentals, his life must be in fair accord with his neighbours.

Perhaps he is a born subject of despotic rule which from time immemorial has been the unquestioned tradition of his ancestors. Coming into contact with more developed civilizations he, and perhaps many others, desires for his people a freedom such as he has seen elsewhere. But the mass of his countrymen are still content with the government as it is, or as it might conceivably be even in the present despotic form. What shall such a man do? At least he should reflect that freedom is a long growth, and does not consist merely in the possession of formal political institutions. If these are the expression of a free life it is because they and the people have grown together. They cannot be adopted by another people as one might accept another man's suit of clothes; nor would the mere destruction of a form of government create liberty, any more than an explosive bomb will build a house. Let any such person ask what will create the free spirit, and what native customs or institutions are to hand from which freedom might be evolved. There has never yet been a despot who would not have preferred to rule by the

free consent of his people, nor yet one who could rule against a whole people capable of freedom. To live for this must be a long and patient work which may well excite the ardent sympathy of the foreigner; but liberty and its institutions must be of native growth or it will only assume the name without becoming the thing.

Or it may be that the laws of a free people need revision and alteration. In this case there is provided within the constitution the means by which such revision may take place. It is to obtain by persuasion the free consent of the body politic in an orderly manner. Meanwhile social order demands that established law shall be loyally obeyed until that free consent is gained; and if delay involve some personal inconvenience the common good requires that the citizen shall patiently bear the ill that he is working to remove.

It is so in all matters not involving the essentials of the moral life. As to what is essential, we are no more free than in the case of the law of gravity. If we take liberties, we come to grief; and the law fulfils itself in consequent pain or disaster. These laws are of God; and we can neither alter them nor escape their issues if we neglect them.

There still remain many things which are of no proper concern to our neighbours. Amongst these, perhaps the most important is religion, which essentially is so purely personal that no man should be deemed irreligious merely because he refrains from current expressions of creed or customary forms of worship. He should not be judged unpatriotic because his love of country does not lead him to take a warlike attitude. We should not judge him to be unkind or uncharitable because he does not yield to our solicitations ; nor have we the right to press upon our neighbour a mode of life to which he may object, so long as his own is innocent of harm to anyone. And in a hundred other ways we should remember that whilst it is perfectly true that individual behaviour does in many ways concern the body politic, it no less concerns the commonweal that the freedom of the individual should not be restricted beyond what the common good demands.

Not to prolong these special observations, there can be no better summary of all that is here intended than the words of ancient scripture, ' Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God . . . Fear God and

keep his commandments, for this is the whole of human life . . . Wisdom (i.e., the prudent governance of life) is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom . . . it is thy life. . . . The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.' Therefore let us begin at the beginning, that we may not fail in the end.

V

SOCIAL SOLIDARITY

THE radical social laws, to which reference has been made in the preceding pages, are of a quite universal character; but as yet there has never appeared in history any really universal application of them. Hence from the difficulties attending the culture of righteousness one might despair of the idea. Yet the more closely we can approach the conditions of primitive human life the more completely we shall see these laws in operation.

By this is not meant that within the limits of any given family, clan, or tribe, individualism has no place, but that, allowing for its existence, ancient life offers nevertheless examples of solidarity such as we may look for in vain—at least under any presently existing form of civilization. Of the inner forms of such primitive life as remain in evidence, outsiders can hardly

speak. Missionaries, who should perhaps know them best, tell us of the great reserve of aboriginals towards strangers; but that as against the outer world the solidarity of this primitive life is fairly complete.

As things now stand we are between two social ideals of which the earlier has all but disappeared from the world; whilst the latter is as yet struggling to the birth. There was a more or less complete solidarity of old, but it was limited to the family or clan, and did not extend beyond. That of the future must be universal; and it can arrive only by the common culture of righteousness, laying stress only on what is essential and frankly leaving non-essentials for national, local, or even personal regulation. Between these two ideals, the one broken down and the other as yet far out of reach, lies the wide area of individualism, with all its confusion, but also with all the wonderful expansion of individual possibility which competitive life has brought about. We cannot return to the old, we can only hope and labour for the future, meanwhile enduring as best we may until the issues of pure individualism shall be clear to the simplest mind.

The most perfect, as also the most familiar,

form of solidarity is that of the hive, where the whole community is ordered into perfect mutual truth and service for the common good. So far as can be observed every member of the hive has his appointed place and work in the social scheme. No bee complains of his appointed work and of his contribution to the common need. In case of any attack upon the hive, or any trespass within its bounds, there is no formal consultation as to what shall be done with the intruder. Instantly, with the same instinctive spontaneity as one member of the human body will move to the support and defence of the whole or any other part of the organism, the stranger is at once assailed. It matters not how many may fall in defence of the hive, their fate does not deter others from the attempt to serve the body politic. You cannot frighten a bee from its social duty. In many other directions where life other than human is based on the social principle the subordination of the individual to the service of the group is perfect : individualism has no existence so long as the social bond holds good. Within the flock or herd there may be strife for supremacy and leadership, but as against outside danger all such internal

strife is in abeyance until the common safety is assured. Individualism is evidently a social peril against which the herd instinctively defends itself.

It may be said that the development of life in these instances has been towards the perfection of instinct or traditional racial habit wherein adaptive intelligence appears rather as a weak concomitant than an object of attainment, whereas the path of human progress seems to have had rationality rather than instinct as its goal. But the end is not yet. Rationality must have led to the more or less perfect adaptation of these humbler forms of life to their environment. But in these cases the exercise of reason seems almost to have found its limit, and for lack of any further open way before them has become stereotyped into that fixity of habit which we call instinct.

As, however, there are not wanting to them some appropriate powers of adjustment to slight changes of environment which must be regarded as rational rather than instinctive, so in human life there are evidences of a social instinct that was once more dominant than at present. And if our line of progress is to be rational we have nevertheless to make

the products of reason habitual in the larger, as has already been done in the smaller range of life. Our goal, no less than that of the social animals, is a righteousness that shall be established in instinctive habit without losing the power of progressive adjustment to a changeful environment. The deep moral convictions which experience shall have wrought within us must be perfected and finally committed to the guardianship of the social instinct for which our excess of individualism has not yet quite unfitted us.

To say nothing of the prevailing forms of communism amongst barbaric tribes we may note some presently existing strains of the social instinct in civilized communities such as our own. We touch on such a one in the existence of an almost abnormal family unity. In some cases it is so striking that if from the outside any member of this group is unkindly affected the whole family is at once roused to his defence. The man may be quite in the wrong and deserve the pain and annoyance that have befallen him, but right or wrong do not enter into consideration. A member of the family has been hostilely affected, and all the others treat the matter as an offence to themselves. You

might as well disturb a nest of hornets as in any way of enmity touch a member of this family in which the sentiment of solidarity is so quick and living. In like manner the group is ready to push the fortunes of any separate member far beyond the limits of social equity and fair play. It is no question of public advantage. That there are others with far greater claims to advancement on the grounds of personal merit and fitness has no weight with this family. Anyone within the recognized degrees of affinity must be advanced irrespective of the worthier claims of another beyond the limits of this closed circle.

The same thing with various modifications appears on the plane of patriotism. To one another we may freely admit our national defects, but even so our demerits are not so serious as those of foreigners. Let an alien criticize us in respect of our admitted faults we are apt to resent the intrusion. Such criticism may be perfectly just, and expressed without undue harshness : that is nothing to the point ; the critic is a foreigner, and hence the resentment.

Observe further our graduated sympathy for others in proportion as the sufferers are more or less remote from ourselves in kinship

or space. We can hear without any great emotional disturbance of a whole province in China being desolated by flood, famine, pestilence, or war. The place is not only remote, but the people are even more so by the almost unbridgeable gulf that marks our historic, racial, and mental separateness. Were the region affected nearer home, or were the sufferers members of the white races, still more if they were of our own blood, as would be the case if the event were to happen in our Colonies, our sensitiveness to the horror would be proportionately intensified. Yet even so, our sympathetic suffering would not be so keen as in the case of an event of much smaller range in our more immediate neighbourhood.

Some one will say that all this is very natural. Just so, it is natural; and it is an illustration of the elementary social law which in its sphere is as natural as the law of attraction which varies directly as the mass and inversely as the square of the distance.

Other survivals are to be observed in certain forms of ostracism which seem eminently unreasonable.

Here is the case of a man who follows an

occupation both lawful and necessary, yet horrible. Why should a hangman be avoided as worse than the plague ? To speak of him, still more to write about him, seems somehow to be a breach of good manners. Why ? He discharges a duty which the well-considered law of the land has decreed must and shall be carried out. Yet no self-respecting person would hold converse with him for a moment beyond what might be absolutely unavoidable ; and if perchance some accident had brought one into touch with such a person, nothing short of a perfumed bath could free one from a sense of personal defilement. One reason for this loathing may be that the office of public executioner is a self-imposed and vicarious duty such as none but the most degraded can be imagined to undertake. The function properly belongs to the Sheriff, who gladly passes it over to another for money. Even so respectable a person as a Sheriff usually is would become a social pariah if he personally discharged this duty which belongs to his otherwise very honourable office. The hangman takes human life for money in discharge of a duty that does not belong to him ; and no consideration of necessary service to the state

can make him socially clean. There is probably more than this in the matter. The loathsomeness of the office which yet is universal amongst civilized peoples is probably derived from some ancient form of tribal taboo. The man is accursed : against him society is solid.

What then about his innocent children ? By his unclean service the father might earn enough to send his sons to Eton and afterwards to the universities. By natural character and mental endowments they might personally be more than worthy of these great advantages ; but if the family connexion were known would they be received into any school or college, even the humblest, to say nothing of the proudest of their kind ? Here the ancient law of solidarity acts with cumulative force. It not only excludes from social intercourse those who in their own persons are regarded with loathing, though their offence lies in giving effect to a lawful decree of which society approves, but it associates all the members of that family in a common penalty though only one of the group has committed the offence.

Something very like this happens in the case of the relatives of one who has com-

mitted a notorious crime, say murder, embezzlement, or any other penal offence. If the matter could be concealed the suffering of relatives would probably be vastly reduced; but it is blazoned abroad and by this fact they feel themselves drawn into the sphere of criminality. No one for a moment blames these innocent persons either for the disreputable deed or for their connexion with the criminal. And yet all these are made to feel, or at any rate they do feel, a personal disgrace for a thing for which they are not responsible. Fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters, and more remote relations, and in a minor degree all persons of the same name feel themselves attaint. Towns have been known to petition for changed names when anything particularly disgraceful has happened within their borders. It is impossible not to sympathize with this feeling which is founded on no rational principle except the persistence of an ancient social law under which the whole community was held to be responsible for the evil done by any of its members. It is all very unreasonable, nor can it be in any way justified, but the indisputable fact will not yield to reason. It is a sort of common taint from which the

innocent members cannot escape. It is not merely that outsiders entertain this sentiment as against them ; it is themselves that accept the situation of identity with the condemned. If this personal feeling did not exist they might be more indifferent to social reproach ; but the chief difficulty is that the sense of shame arises within their own minds : the taint of crime is in their blood.

The disgrace of bastardy affords another, if less gruesome, illustration of the existence of this law of solidarity. One need not here enter upon the profoundly interesting questions associated with the custom of marriage. Enough to say that in all existing forms of civilization the family has become the unit of social life. In Christendom, its foundation consists in the legal union of one man and one woman. The children born of these, subsequent to the rite of marriage, together with the mother take the name of the father, and all pedigrees are reckoned along the paternal line. Till now it has been considered of the greatest importance that every child should be born within the legally defined limits of the family, otherwise the mother and child became social outcasts. Now the unfavourable judgment of society is more

seriously directed against the offending mother than against the putative father, a difference of treatment that, apart from the obvious certainty attaching to maternity as compared with paternity, is probably derived from social conditions older than the institution of our present family.

This is now felt to be unjust; but, whatever the cause, the woman's burden and blame is vastly heavier than the man's. She may have been misled, may be almost innocent, or guilty only of falling under the influence of momentary passion against which she had been unprepared by warning. Nothing, however, will wash away the stain of her fault. The merciful will pity her ; they will do their best to help the unfortunate one back to a virtuous life, and will even seek to cover up the intolerable shame. No statute law can punish her for she has committed no crime ; and yet if her fault become known she has to bear a most painful opprobrium. Not even the judgment once written in the dust on the temple floor in Jerusalem can modify the unanimous social verdict. All that we have ever learned of neighbourly goodwill, of sympathy for suffering, of personal forgiveness or condonement of fault,

is vain against the solidarity of public sentiment which demands chastity in woman and lawful conditions of birth for children.

There are many offences against society which, superficially regarded, might be thought no less harmful to the state or social morality ; yet these are readily both forgiven and forgotten ; but this failure of the woman is neither forgiven nor forgotten ; and strangely enough the social verdict is the most fiercely sustained by her own sex.

It is no adequate rejoinder to remark that all this mental suffering must be endured solely because society has not been asked to add its official sanction to the union of these two persons, that only a symbolic rite has been omitted, a few words have remained unspoken under appointed conditions. The matter is vastly more serious than this. Society has determined, and it is within its competence so to determine that, for the sake of its own vital interests, children shall be born only within the family, and to that end has instituted marriage under the most solemn sanctions. It will dispute the authority of the church to make a sacrament of marriage, it will be quite indifferent to the interval between the legal ceremony and the

birth of children, and take no notice of occasional deferment of marriage till there be prospect of issue ; but it will not surrender its right to create the lawful relation of the sexes. This social law is older than any written statute and is enforced by a common feeling of propriety which is beyond the power of law to abrogate. It is this traditional sentiment that the frail woman has offended ; and society is solid against her.

But again what shall we say of the innocent child ? How great must be the suffering here none but its subject can know or the accomplished novelist describe. What shifts are made in concealment of parental fault ! What scorn must be endured at school or college or even workshop, if pride in the honour of father and mother cannot be shared with others ! Many such unfortunate persons have had to change their names and seek strange homes only to get out of reach of this special form of social injustice, yet never escaping their own secret sense of shame.

It would seem that nothing can compensate for this loss of social esteem. It affects all classes alike, the poorest no less than those who might seem to have most to lose. To be of honest birth, be it of the humblest, is

the simplest and most deeply rooted instinct of social life. Now there are few of either sex who would personally venture to approve the severity of this social penalty, and still fewer who would hesitate to inflict it, or not feel the social stigma if it fell to their own lot. It is the effective survival of a solidarity which even Christianity sustains rather than weakens.

Of course we may expect the same law to hold good in honourable directions. Compare the status of a soldier with that of the public executioner. Here also is one who is prepared to shed blood in the service of the state. It is an essential part of his profession, and he does it for pay and probably the hope of further reward. It is true that he risks his own life in the discharge of his voluntarily assumed duty; but it may be his duty to kill, and when he does this he usually goes further than any executioner has to go. His intelligence department is of course a concomitant necessity, but any service that the spy may achieve, whilst eagerly received, cannot be rewarded in open honourable fashion.

Beside his pay the soldier obtains a glory for deeds of destruction that no labouring

philanthropist, whatever his devotion, has ever received. History records many instances of a great soldier turning successfully against the master to whose service he has sworn fealty; yet society condones the enormity, and after generations excuse if they do not praise the successful treason. He has directed armed force for his own advancement for which many loyal people must die, and others suffer most grievously. He breaks down long standing social orders of family, tribe, or nation, and for all this he is honoured as no other man ever is. If this difference of reward lay solely in the fact that he kills only the enemies of his country, whilst the executioner removes those of his own fellow citizens who have been declared unworthy to live, it might be intelligible. But no reward equals that of the soldier who succeeds in overthrowing his own government and establishes a tyranny or founds a new dynasty.

We may accept the suggestion that the Roman republic had declined to its fall before Cæsar overthrew it, but it does not appear that this successful soldier ever attempted to arrest the decline, whereas we do know that he founded an empire on its

ruins of which his nephew became chief. France does not repudiate the little Corsican, and even in England his story is more often read and admired than that of the man who beat him and saved Europe from his clutches. What is it that makes the soldier so honoured? Not surely his fine clothes, nor his excessive brain power which we are assured by experts is greater than that of other men. His work is destructive, and neighbouring nations would better consult their mutual interests if they would agree to dispense with his services. But whether it be Hannibal, Cæsar, William the Norman, or Napoleon, the whole world concurs in honouring them.

Doubtless some good may be discovered from the great disturbance which they create in the world. Europe is not what it would have long continued to be but for Napoleon ; but whether the change is improvement, or whether it was worth all it cost is matter of grave question. We may value the strain of Norman blood that came with the conquest of England because it has helped to make us what we are, but it is a question whether a purely Anglo-Saxon civilization might not have been just as good as, or even better than, that which historically has taken its place.

If any reason can be found for the excessive honour conferred on the soldier in modern times, we must go back to primitive conditions of life when he was the only power to defend the tribe or nation from external attack or by his successful invasion of others made his own people great and famous. Whatever the cause, his repute soars beyond all reasonable judgment. All women and most men conspire to do him honour, whilst the necessary executioner with all his family are banned. Social solidarity is equally effective for honour or disgrace and is unreasonable in both.

Surviving evidences of this solid and unreasonable social sentiment are to be met with in various directions. An aristocracy founded in conquest may for a good while justify its exclusiveness on the grounds of necessary self-defence ; but the pride of birth which regards it as contamination to marry beyond the limits of the order points to the social force of which we are now speaking. The clergy of a state or dominant church are hedged about by a consecration that sets them apart from all other men, and sometimes apart from the highest national interests. Monkish orders exhibit the same tendency

with remarkable intensity. They are a law unto themselves; and are seldom known to live for other purposes than the advance of their order. Feudalism had a solidarity of its own, as was also the case with the mediæval craft-guilds. The legal and medical professions stand on a level with trade unions in separating themselves from the common interests of the nation and cultivating that *esprit de corps* which results in a sort of sectional morality, presenting a more or less solid front against the outer world.

In small tribes and clans solidarity appears in its most attractive form. The paternal relation of chiefs and clansmen takes a most intimate family aspect. It may not mean much that the Russian peasant shall speak and think of the Czar as the father of the race, or that barbarous tribes in our own empire should thus regard our King, but in small communities this relationship is most vividly real.

In his 'Fair Maid of Perth' Scott has given us a most remarkable picture of this living relationship of chief and clan. A traditional clan feud was to be settled by a combat between champions chosen from both parties. On the one side is a young chieftain who by

education and mixed strains of descent fails in the warlike qualities of his clan. On his side, however, care has been taken that Torquil, his foster-father, with his brave sons, should form his special body-guard. As one after another of these falls in the fierce contest Torquil cries out, 'Another for Hector!' And to this call the unfailing answer comes, 'Death for Hector!' No selfish hesitation prevents their complete identification with their beloved though degenerate chief, and to the last man they die in his defence. Of course, it may be allowed that in this and other remarkable scenes Scott has somewhat idealized the ancient conditions of tribal life, but there is no reason to doubt the substantial truth and significance of these border stories.

In olden times the tribal or clan solidarity was very perfect. Within the organization, no doubt, the individuals may be supposed to have had their separate interests, but the group was not comparable with the loose aggregation of a modern English village: they were a family, and their relations with each other and their chief were rather akin to those observable in a group of gregarious animals. And we may suppose that it is a

survival of this feeling that draws Scotchmen together beyond anything known to Englishmen. Such a condition is too instinctive to be called moral in the ordinary sense of that term. The interest common to this small group is supreme and hardly becomes an object of special consciousness. There was no singular virtue, in Scott's stories, in a devotion to the chief which was so unreservedly shared by all. They were all of one blood, one family of which the chief was the hereditary head, its father and living symbol.

It is said that once a pagan chief was on the point of being baptized when, as if disturbed by an afterthought, he turned to the bishop who was waiting to perform the ceremony and asked what must have seemed an irrelevant question: 'Where are my forefathers?' 'In hell,' replied the imprudent bishop. 'Then I will go with my forefathers,' returned the chief, refusing to submit to a religion that would separate him from his own folk beyond the grave.

Such vestiges of social solidarity, so prevalent in the earlier conditions of human life, might be very largely added to, but a few cases of special interest occur in the

Bible, and are too remarkable to be omitted.

In the forefront stands the legend of the Fall, in the mortal issue of which all his descendants to the end of time are made to share with their father Adam. It may be that this far-away legend bears some relation with Persian dualism and so had not originally the same significance as in later times, but there can hardly be a doubt that in its present form it attempts to solve the mystery of sin and evil by the conception of a most remarkable human solidarity. It is not on Adam and Eve alone that the consequences of sin must fall, but sin itself as a new principle in life, with all its successive and expanding issues, must affect all their children without exception to the end of time. The very blood is tainted, and the guilt of the primitive offence falls on all, so that not even a new born babe can be regarded as innocent. It is parallel with clan kinship under a feudal overlord. When the chief becomes involved in guilt the whole clan must suffer the consequences just as if each member had done the very thing attributed to the chieftain. All suffer with and on account of one.

In the book of Numbers (chap. xvi) we are told that Korah, Dathan, and Abiram

made sedition against the authority of Moses and Aaron. As a punishment the earth is said to have opened and engulfed both the offenders, their wives, children, and all that they had.

At the sack of Jericho (Josh. vii) a man of the name of Achan appropriated a part of the spoil which with the whole city and its inhabitants had been devoted to Jahweh. For this offence not the offender alone but his whole family with him was exterminated.

These stories are of course legendary and were intended to serve a purpose quite other than that for which they are now quoted. But it is pertinent to ask what was the social mentality and morality of those, whoever they were and whatever their purpose, who created or selected these stories as part of the sacred scriptures to be read in public for common instruction? It never seems to have occurred to any of them that there was here any social principle that needed explanation, nor does anyone suggest that here there was something quite inequitable. There is no suspicion that there was anything wrong in a punishment that included so many innocent victims. It seems to be unquestioned that all who stood in blood relation-

ship with the offenders could have no separate innocence, and the latter could have no separate guilt.

We pass over a period during which this social principle, if not definitely called in question, was productive of great mental and moral strain. We observe its reappearance with notable clearness in Paul's scheme of Christian doctrine. It is taken with such matter of fact assurance that one might almost forget that as a principle it had ever been disputed. With the Corinthians (I, xv) the author argues 'As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' This is repeated in the epistle to the Romans (v), 'As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.' In short, the whole Christian scheme of redemption, its vicarious sacrifice, its atonement and imputed righteousness is based on the solidarity of Christ with believers. The whole race was summed up in Adam for condemnation, and believers in Christ were summed up for redemption. In scholastic theology this is spoken of as a feudal relationship. May it not be a principle that brings the whole scheme into line with the older law of social solidarity?

We do not now enter on the inquiry as to how far the founder of Christianity did or did not accept this principle as the basis of his great movement. Considering that it was seriously questioned by the Jews one might suggest that the doctrine was an import from Gentilism and would stand as evidence that no Jew had introduced it. But let that pass. It was adopted by the Christian Church, which thus became a new family, clan, tribe, or nation, of which Christ was the chief, with claims to supreme devotion and service. The acceptance of the Christian formula of confession was the ground of adoption into this unique family ; and being so included, the new-comer was entitled to all the privileges and subject to all the duties of this peculiar brotherhood. His duty was unlimited daring and suffering for Christ, i.e., for the brotherhood. And his great privilege was personal salvation in the world to come through the imputation to him of the work of the Redeemer. Outside this new family compact there could be no pledge of safety, for that was to be ' out of Christ ' ; but within and because he was within, he was secure. As to the present, in place of the solace and support of old and natural

family relations he had that of a vast brotherhood to shield him so long as he remained worthy, a worthiness that was made the subject of judgment by the authorities of the community he had joined.

We are not concerned to trace the history of this last example of social solidarity. Whatever it has been, there is abundant evidence of its having broken up. And this because it was not conceived on universal principles. What is wanted in the world is not the mere confession of a creed, or the belief in conventional relations with Deity either with or without Christ, but a faith in and obedience to a perceived divine law which alone is valid for society, as natural law is in the physical world.

In view of past history it cannot be said that human nature is not capable of making itself subservient to society. The vestiges of an old order are still with us which show how well man could act under humbler conditions. It may be admitted that the state referred to was possible only in small communities and under local religions; and it is probable that universalism in religion, as well as the breaking down of tribal relations by conquest and empire, had something to

do with its decline. For by it all old loyalties are superseded by the all-inclusive loyalty to one supreme God. But the time has not yet arrived in which the larger unity into which universalism in religion calls us shall be filled with its appropriate social spirit.

In olden times there were social solidarities of a special feudal character, in virtue of which all minor chiefs in gradation owed fealty to their immediate superior. We are told, however, that when the Norman entered England he required the personal fealty of every landowner great and small. There was now nothing to stand between the lowest and the highest of the feudal order. Historians delight in telling us that this was practically a summons from the king to the larger unity as Englishmen. Formerly the separate loyalties made the men on one side of a river strangers and foreigners to those on the other. Instead of this came the call to the wider family, and people at length learned to be as proud of being Englishmen as they had previously been of being Kentishmen or Yorkshiremen.

Perhaps one may be pardoned the imperfection of the analogy if the idea be conveyed. But thus it seems. The call of Universalism

revealed in Hebraism and so emphasized and purified in Jesus, is just that which creates the one human community and therefore the need for the one righteousness. How that is to be secured is the question of questions.

That it cannot be secured by institutionalism is clear from the many failures of the past. Indeed, it is an ideal that must for ages be still a future thing to the race ; but not therefore so distant from the individual. Truth to his own better nature and to the small group in which he passes his life, may well be the stepping-stone to a truth that shall include his nation and even the world.

VI

CASUISTRY

TO persons of ordinary moral fibre there is seldom much difficulty in perceiving the abstract right or wrong in a special case. Still less if the matter is quite impersonal. The chief difficulty arises when personal interests are at stake and when prudential motives entangle us in mental confusion and conflict. Therefore people who are in a hurry, or have small confidence in themselves, generally seek the advice of friends, or other ready means of satisfying themselves as to the rightness or the wrongness of their doings. Generally such advice is sought *post facta*, when nothing can be done except to avert the consequences of things irrevocable. Hence has arisen Casuistry, which is generally understood to be some kind of system which endeavours to bring under definite rules those actions in respect of which some doubt may lie. The question has two aspects :—

(*a*) For those who desire to live within recognized rules of conduct.

(*b*) For those who desire to escape the conditions which such rules imply.

Of all such systems the most famous is that of the Roman Church, whereof the object is to guide confessors in the imposition of penance and to furnish rules by which the priest may give expert advice. All these systems have this in common, that they refer to some external authority by which cases may be decided as by an expert, and it is assumed that the person seeking advice is incompetent for self-direction.

Now, whilst it is sometimes of real service to lay bare the perplexity of one's mind to a wise and prudent friend, it is by no means easy or usual to be quite frank in these personal revelations, so that the friend is disenabled in his advice ; on the other hand it would be so much better if we could decide for ourselves, for the best mind clarifier is the sincere desire for righteousness. And if a man were first of all to turn back on himself and ask ' Do I really wish the right thing ? ' most questions of casuistry would be resolved, for ' Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.'

The following are a few cases which are in no sense submitted to specialists in casuistry. They are real or imaginary, such as in one form or another continually occur, and might be added to indefinitely. Some may perhaps be regarded as already provided for by custom or statute law; but even so there is the twofold presumption that the statutes stand for some intended public good, and also that a person of lax conscience may seek to evade this legal intention. In any case it would probably be of service to put oneself in the situation implied when the particular case does not press for immediate personal solution. It might even be useful to discuss the case with one's friends when no immediate issues are involved. Having in this manner arrived at a clear judgment a man will probably find himself strengthened in an emergency to do what he had considered right when no pressure lay upon him.

But let us first recapitulate the essential and elementary conditions of morality, which has always social reference and significance.

1. We are essentially social beings, born into and must remain in society. Without this social alliance there is no progress nor even life itself.

2. The essential conditions of social life are :—

(*a*) Truth, trustworthiness, goodwill, and sympathy.

(*b*) The subordination of the individual to the general good.

(*c*) The freedom of the individual within these limits.

(*d*) The care of the individual by the community.

We are to remember that these fundamental rules are not of our appointment. They lie at the very springs of all associated human life. And, in considering these appended cases, there should be no sort of appeal to outside urgency, but to the inner wish to be fair and just. Even should we discuss them with our friends, they are of personal concern to them and to us. Suppose then that we make ourselves familiar with the rules, apply them honestly, and 'play the game.'

CASES OF CASUISTRY

1. An ancient Egyptian magistrate, having to judge between two litigants, of whom one was his kinsman, decided against the latter, lest he should be supposed to have judged corruptly

2. A rich traveller is in the habit of giving large gratuities by which a high standard of expectation is created in those whose duty it is to serve all impartially.

3. A troublesome nervous patient will only be satisfied with needless medicines. The doctor dispenses coloured water, and charges for drugs.

4. A man finds himself innocently in possession of a bad shilling.

5. A person of fertile age, having the gravest reason for believing that he (or she) is afflicted with hereditary disease, marries.

6. A man of expert knowledge purchases from an ignorant peasant valuable old furniture 'for an old song.'

7. A barrister defends a prisoner whom he certainly knows to be guilty.

8. A certain company, limited by law in the public interest to a certain maximum dividend to its shareholders, 'waters its stock.'

9. An undischarged bankrupt resumes business in his wife's name.

10. Galileo asserted that the earth moved round the sun and not *vice versa*. Upon the demand of the Inquisition he publicly recanted, salving his conscience by murmuring, *sotto voce*, 'But it does move.'

11. Fearing to miss a train, a passenger holding a third-class ticket hurries into a first-class carriage, and neither changes carriages at the first opportunity nor reports himself at the journey's end.

12. Two persons faithfully live together as man and wife without the sanction of the law.

13. The trade unionists of a certain factory go on strike against the employment of non-unionists.

14. 'As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also so to them.'

15. Assuming that the supremacy of the papacy was effected by the aid of apocryphal and antedated decretals, what then?

16. A person in public authority appoints friends or relations to office to the prejudice of better men.

17. A priest in his official capacity hears confession of a crime for which an innocent man is to be tried.

18. A man bequeaths estates to a charitable institution to the serious prejudice of needy relatives.

19. A clever boy, having left school before the usual public inspection, is brought back again for inspection day.

20. A certain editor of a newspaper is prepared to run it on any lines that its proprietor may desire.

21. A missionary comes to a city which is in a state of religious and political ferment. His open preaching is regarded by the authorities as involving the city and nation in serious peril. He will neither listen to remonstrance nor leave the city.

22. A certain traveller failed at the custom house to declare goods that he knew to be contraband.

23. On the verge of bankruptcy, a certain man gave a set of communion plate to the church.

The plate was retained after bankruptcy was declared.

24. A person witnesses a document prior to its actual signature.

25. An employer discovers that his trusted servant has embezzled his money, and simply dismisses him.

26. A clergyman or minister finds himself quite out of harmony with the creed on the basis of which he obtained and now holds his office.

27. Under the prestige and power of the mother-country a colony was able to develop into a potential nationality, and then treated the mother as a foreigner.

28. Certain local tradesmen are in the habit of offering gifts to the servants of their customers.

29. A man picks up a sovereign in the street.

30. A and B are two fellow servants. A discovers B to be a discharged criminal.

31. If a man may do what he will with his own, what then is his own in the case where land is left unused to the public detriment?

32. After entering into possession of an estate, a man discovers a later will less favourable to himself.

33. A Member of Parliament votes on a matter in which his private interests are involved.

34. A man in prison for a crime, for which he is acknowledged to be innocent, receives the royal pardon.

35. By the extraordinary humanity and remedial measures of modern times, many people are kept alive whose issue lowers the vital conditions of the race.

36. A mistress gives a written character to one of her late servants, but omits a very important particular because it is not specially asked for.

37. At a game of cards one of the players accidentally exposes his hand, which is also accidentally observed by one only of the other players.

38. A prisoner of war accepts modified freedom on his parole, but sees an opportunity of escape.

39. At the urgent request of a patient in mortal agony a doctor gives an overdose of a narcotic.

40. Certain peasants have immemorial rights of pasture on an adjacent common. To the general economic advantage the common is enclosed, but the peasants receive no compensation.

41. Wishing to obtain a pure-blooded race as the basis of the restored community at Jerusalem, the Jewish reformer ordered the abandonment of all alien wives with their children.

42. At a certain world-wide corn market a certain group of merchants endeavoured to buy up the whole estimated supply for the following year.

43. Having sworn to the terms of Magna Charta, King John was absolved from his oath by the Pope, and thereupon held himself to be free.

44. The Diocletian persecution was mainly directed to the destruction of Christian books. Hearing that his church was to be searched,

Mensurius, the Bishop of Carthage, ordered the removal of all MSS. of the scriptures to a place of safety, and heretical writings to be substituted.

45. Hazael, the general of Benhadad of Damascus, was sent to Elisha the prophet of Israel to inquire as to the issue of his master's illness. The prophet replied that there was nothing seriously the matter, but added: 'I grieve at what you will do in Israel when you are King in Damascus.' Whereupon Hazael returns to his master, delivers the comfortable assurance, promptly smothers him, and assumes the crown.

46. An association accepts public contributions, which are offered for social purposes, and spends them on religious propagandism.

47. A man, having been in honourable service of his country, finds, on his retirement, some difficulty in adjusting his life to a reduced income, and accepts a directorship on the Board of a Company with whose business he is quite unfamiliar and with which he is not expected to concern himself.

48. On his death-bed King David thus addressed his son Solomon: 'I promised that I would not put Shimei to death for cursing me in my trouble, but do not thou hold him guiltless.'

49. A man obtains early and secret information of the loss of a ship in which he is interested and promptly reinsures it.

50. Finding that certain pagan customs were quite ineradicable the Church christened them.

51. A certain discharged bankrupt was subsequently successful in business. Whereupon

he gathered together his old creditors to a feast. But, anticipating the 'grace before meat,' he paid his remaining debts with full interest up to date.

52. Regulus, a Roman prisoner at Carthage, was sent with ambassadors to Rome to arrange terms of peace. Instead of assisting in this he demanded that Rome should continue the war. He then returns to Carthage.

53. A Magistrate sits on the Bench when a case is being tried to which he is a party.

54. The president of a great association makes pronouncement on a much debated public question with which his association has no special connexion. And this he does without consulting the associated members, and without intimating whether he speaks in his public or private capacity.

55. Certain lands yielding a stated annual revenue are given to trustees for the education of a certain number of poor children. In process of time the land greatly increases in value, and the said trustees only pay the annual sum originally required.

56. At the close of the Russo-Turkish war, Bosnia and Herzegovina were temporarily placed under the protection of Austria. Some years afterwards, without asking the consent of the treaty powers, they were proclaimed as part of the Austrian Empire.

57. A clergyman, objecting to read the Athanasian Creed, imposes that duty on his curate.

58. A man lends his name to a friend as

security in a money transaction knowing that he could not pay the forfeit in case of his friend's failure.

59. A man devises his estate in such wise that only one of several of his children is benefited.

60. Robert, King of Scotland, sends his son James to France for his education. On the way a storm drives the prince upon the English coast where he is detained by Henry IV. Said Henry, 'I will give him as good an education here as he would have obtained in France.' He kept his word—and the prince.

Now it is evident that such cases might be added to indefinitely. History is always available for examples which though they belong to the past are not really dead in the principles they illustrate. Law is full of them drawn from politics, professions, business and social intercourse. Only detach them from present passions and personal partialities, they may afford means of quickening our sense of right and of strengthening the true social instinct to know and choose what makes for the common good, even though the decision involve a personal surrender of much that seems to offer great, and perhaps immediate advantage.

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